

WRIGGLE
Moth
SATIN

FOOT FOOT FOOT FOOT FOOT FOOT

TWIST
Butterfly
SILK

OOH

POLLEN
leaf turquoise

AHH

BLACK VIOLIN ELECTRIC BLACK
Helicopter Stack

CATERPILLAR

G A H R O O O H R

attack
dream

6

dream
attack

V A H R O O O H

NECTAR
turquoise leaf

(ANTENNAE)

(ANTENNAE)

SILK
Butterfly
TWIST

WING

SATIN
Moth
WRIGGLE

DE LOS

A JOURNAL ON & OF TRANSLATION

The second of 12 issues appears in November 1968. It includes:

The Task of the Translator: Walter Benjamin / A Decade or

So for Genji: Edward Seidensticker / Poems &

translations by: Ingeborg Bachmann/Alfred Jarry/

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Charles Olson

gives n em

above the head of John Day's pasture land,
a small parcel for
house 1707 "Margaret Josline widdow"

Only

one such possible person so named at sd date wld
be her son Henry's mother -- and therefore
Margaret Cammock herself, John Josselyn's
Sister-in-law & hostess Black Point, 1671
just before the Indian attack, 1676, after which
no further record* of Henry, or of Margaret his
wife until

*not true. He died, Pemaquid, 1683.

this strange message out either
upper Cherry or of Gee Avenue itself, that

she shall have a small parcel for
house being a widow —

no way else to figure it except

that at some advanced age & with
her son's house

_____ married after 1643, say she was in her 20's
/how long had been Thomas Cammock's wife?/ &

her 2nd husband had died Pemaquid 1683 -----1707 cld b
1643
possible ----- like $\frac{-20}{1623}$ 77 plus 7 -- plus?

FIRST OF ALL OF ALL DOGTOWN PERSONS ? THE
JOSSELYN OF JOSSELYNS OF THE JOHN

"who was again with his brother in the eastern country" ,

July 1663 till

July 1671 ----- and Margaret Cammock Josselyn
mother
of Henry Josselyn, John's nephew born ^{pre-} 1658 /here
by reflux before Indians, with John Wallis from
Falmouth foreside by or after 1675 :

Margaret became Henry Josselyn's wife after
Thomas Cammock's death in 1643

Henry the 2nd her son's child Margaret born

Gloucester 1687

yes :

on Dogtown-to-

be, 1707, the vanguard of it all, apparently, Margaret Josselyn

widow 1st parcel of all

(Wednesday July 24th
1968)

Allen Ginsberg

PLANET NEWS !

Old Howl, Kaddish, Reality Sandwiches 3 City Lights Books covered poems writ 1954-1960. NOW all new poems by ALLEN GINSBERG from beginning of this decade, just published, called PLANET NEWS: Poems 1961-1967, including 150 pages of vocal intelligence & ecstasy : "TV Baby" a messianic rhapsody, "The Change" high on a train coming back from burning grounds of Asia, "Kral Majales" prophecies & lamentations of the first postwar Prague King of May, "Who Be Kind To" annihilating myriad holes of Albert Hall with tears, "Wichita Vortex Sutra" appeal to Heavenly Gods to end War--White Magic breaks thru--total Rhetoric, "Wales Visitation" first XX Century pantheistic nature poem composed on Acid--white magic identical with human kind-ness..... High Intellect! Exquisite prosody! Celestial vulgar humor! Solemn Experience! Blake & Whitman ride again! An ecological thrill! READ ALL ABOUT IT while you still can & Ginsberg still on the planet! Blessings on rural flower Children & Madison Avenue Warmakers! PLANET NEWS \$2 / CITY LIGHTS BOOKS / 261 Columbus Ave, San Francisco Cal 94133

Carl Thayler

(two poems

Where my heart is not
those cottonwood, those oak
the shade to come in under
is not there
grows only smaller
 my mother
sits in that yard
back of the house on Laurel
is in the dress worn to bury my father,
in that dark sheath
is the only land before the Pacific.

PEE WEE DISTARCY

It begins with a hole
being no decision but
like the cat puts his foot into
your coffee, is
the trail to the prey

these simple maneuvers . Pee Wee
like Falstaff
a reconciled hemisphere
with injury so swollen & robust
obscene Graces
surround him

a fat man . never won a race
slops over
the stain comes to the shirt
too quickly, is
a trail thru to the heart

I mean it is a world
of hard knocks & he
ripped 40 feet of fence out to die (
the toilet so situated & occupied
when hit
a bare ass thru flames moving out . Pee Wee

it was contempt
moved through fire

in passing through
is love

Harvey Bialy

whoresongs

"the eye of man hath not heard nor the tongue seen"

hot dreams of black flesh
this confrontation. songs for whores. but semen for them too & jewels
& furs & cadillacs & cadillacs & the finest of all liquors & drugs. these
nameless women could from me extract all that I don't have but would
for them gladly get. forsaking all for them.

1

black ladies of the crystalline court
who knows them who also want
wants not

surely their loveliness is everything
their shy eyes
burning with lust
beyond desire

2

& I will say entering them is entering a temple
and record a false music in my longing

who has not entered
but turns dream to memory

an imagined look
a jewelled gaze
I look
away

the light glances off the hood
in the turning they are vanished

3

moaning under the skin
they are naked under
their love is as iridescent as eyeshadow

audire amare
I do

Jerome Rothenberg

THE TWELFTH HORSE-SONG OF FRANK MITCHELL

(Navaho)

Key: wnn N nnnn N gahn hawuNnawu nngobaheegwing

Some are & are going to my howinouse baheegwing hawuNnawu N
nngahn baheegwing

Some are & are going to my howinouse baheegwing hawuNnawu N
nngahn baheegwing

Some are & some are gone to my howinouse nnaht bahyee naht-
gwing buhtzzm bahyee noohwinnnGUUH

Because I was (N gahn) I was the boy raised Ng the dawn(n) (n)
but some are & are gowing to my howinouse baheegwing
& by going from the house the bluestone hoganome but some are
& are gone to my howinow baheegwing
& by going from the house the shahyNshining hoganome but some
are & are gone to my howinow baheeGWING
& by going from the swollenouse my breath has blown but some
are & are going to my howinouse baheegwing
& by going from the house the hohly honganome but some are &
are gone to my howinow baheegwing ginng ginnng
& from the place of precious cloth we walk (p)pon (N gahn)
but some are gone to my howinow baheegwing hawunawwing
with those prayersticks that are blu(u) (u) but some are &
are (wnn N) gahn to my howinouse baheegwing
with my feathers that are b(lu)u but some are & are going
to my howinouse baheegwing
with my spirit horses that are b(lu)u but some are & are
going to my howinouse baheegwing
with my spirit horses that are blue & dawn but some are &
are gone to my howinow baheegwing nngnnng
with those spirit (hawuN) horses that are bluestone (nawu)
but some are & are gone to my howinow baheegwing
with those hoganorses that are bluestone but some are &
are going to my howinouse baheegwing

with cloth of ever(ee)ee kind tgaahn & draw them on nahhtnnn
 but some are & are gone to my howinow baheegwing
 with jewels of ever(ee)ee kind tgaahn & draw them on nahht-
 nnn but some are & are going to my howinouse baheegwing
 with hoganorses of ever(ee)ee kind to go & draw them on nahht-
 nnn but some are & are going to my howinouse baheegwing
 with sheep of evree(ee)(ee) kind tgaahn & draw them on nahht-
 nnn but some are & are going to my howinouse baheegwing
 with cattle of every kind (N gahn) to go & draw them on nahht-
 nnnn but some are & are going to my howinouse baheegwing
 with men of evree(ee)(ee) kind tgaahn & draw them on nahhtnnn
 but some are & are going to my howinouse baheegwing
 now to my howinome of precious cloth in my backroom Ngahhnn
 where Nnnn but some are & are going to my howinouse
 baheegwing
 in my house of precious cloth we walk (p)pon (N gahn) where
 Nnnn but some are & are going to my howinouse baheegwing
 & everything that's gone before (mmmm) more we walk (p)pon
 but some are & are going to my howinouse baheegwing
 & everything that's more & won't be (be!) be poor but some
 are & some are gone to my howinow baheegwing
 & everything that's (nawuN) living to be old & blest (bhawuN)
 some are & are going to my howinouse baheegwing
 because I am the boy who goes & blesses/blisses to be old but
 some are & are going to my howinouse baheegwing hawuNnawu
 N nngahn baheegwinnng

Zzmmmm are & are gone to my howinow baheegwing hawuNnawu N
 nngahn baheegwing
 Zzmmmm are & are going to my howinouse baheegwing hawuNnawu
 N nngahn baheegwing
 Some are & some are gong to my house now naht bahyeee naht-
 nwinnng buht nawuNNN baheegwinnng

Jerome Rothenberg & Richard Johnny John

from "SHAKIN' THE PUMPKIN": SONGS & OTHER
CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE SOCIETY OF MYSTIC
ANIMALS

(Seneca)

CAW CAW THE CROWS CAW CAW

(i)

the crows came in

(ii)

the crows sat down

A POEM ABOUT A WOLF MAYBE TWO WOLVES

yoweeeeeee
he comes running
across the field where
he comes running
he comes running
along the hill where
he comes running

A POEM ABOUT A DEAD PERSON -- OR WAS IT
A MOLE?

(#2 of a series)

YOHOHEYHEYHEYHEYHAHYEYEYAHHEH
I was going thru the big smoke
YOHOHEYHEYHEYHEYHAHYEYEYAHHEH I went thru this big
YOHOHEYHEYHEYHEYHAHYEYEYAHHEH
I was going thru the big smoke
YOHOHEYHEYHEYHEYHAHYEYEYAHHEH
I went thru the big smoke
YOHOHEYHEYHEYHEYHAHYEYEYAHHEH I was going thru the big
YOHOHEYHEYHEYHEYHAHYEYEYAHHEH
I went thru this big smoke
YOHOHEYHEYHEYHEYHAHYEYEYAHHEH I was g
oke
YOHOHEYHEYHEYHEYHAHYEYEYAHHEH
YOHOHEYHEYHEYHEYHAHYEYEYAHHEH
YOHOHEYHEYHEYHEYHAHYEYEYAHHEH

HEY WHEN I SING THIS SET OF 4 SONGS HEY LOOK
WHAT HAPPENS !

hey when i sing

hey it can help her

yeah it can yeah it's so strong

hey when i sing

hey it can raise her

yeah it can yeah it's so strong

hey when i sing

hey her arm gets straighter

yeah it can yeah it's so strong

hey when i sing

hey her body gets straighter

yeah it can yeah it's so strong

NAVAHO & SENECA TRANSLATIONS: worknotes & sources

The preceding are experiments in the total translation of American Indian poetry: to account for all factors present in the oral originals, including (so-called) meaningless syllables, sound distortions, word play, etc. Attempt is not to set English words to Indian music, but to program English poems from language data in the Indian sources. The obviously different forms taken by the translator's presentations of Navaho & Seneca are, hopefully, a reflection of actual attitudes, etc., in the two cultures.

Seneca. Minimal poetry. Extensive use of a restricted number of non-semantic vocables. Words few & far between. Traditional sacred poetry with a strong play element, especially where used for renewal rather than curing--or, as Seneca poet Dick Johnny John explains it: "...but if everything's alright the one who says the prayer tells them: I leave it up to you folks & if you want to have a good time, have a good time!" Oral elements translated by visual equivalents. To read sounds aloud, follow your own play-principal to wherever it takes you.

Navaho. High word-density. Numerous words distorted from normal soundings in speech; elaborate use of vocables, some likely distorted from Navaho words a long time back. Translation of oral poetry as oral poetry--so that its true medium in English would be tape or disc, not print. Until then, though, the reader should plough on as best he can towards whatever soundings these versions suggest. Total performance would include vocal accompaniment by all present, to whatever degree they're able, the principle of individualized chanting (indeterminacy of performance for all but head-chanter) being uppermost. From a series of 17 horse-songs in the blessingway of medicine man, Frank Mitchell, 1881-1967. The myth by the 12th song has taken Enemy Slayer to the house of his father, The Sun, from which he'll bring back horses & the other good things he sings about.

Post-Script. Thanks for the Navaho tapes & texts on which the 12th Horse-Song is based go to David McAllester of Wesleyan University. Both my workings with him & direct cooperation in translation with Dick Johnny John & other Seneca songmen (Allegany, N.Y.), were made possible thru a grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation in Anthropological Research. But what's presented here is, hopefully, only a beginning.

-- J. R. NYC November 23, 1968

Bernard Forrest

(four poems

Our different ways
Lead toward the high mountains
I am descending

How original to act
Without the support of commandments

Two and a half times
A calculated grandfather
That is the relationship

She seemed to be shoeless
But I looked again
And saw it was
Her teeth had gone

Geese going
alders in leaf

Robert Duncan

THE H.D. BOOK.

PART II Nights and Days: chapter

2

March 11, Saturday. 1961 (1963)

I have been reading recently along a line in the German romantic tradition, perhaps with a vague sense of relation to this search that has a beginning and an end in the entity H. D., but at the same time it seemed to me a rest or a change from my daily preoccupation to read these romantic tales and phantasies in the evening before sleep. Then I found myself following clues of what I sought for in these tales of man's psyche in the northern forest world. Long ago, as a child, I had known Tieck's The Elves, and in after years I had read it again, but now--in the light, that for some must seem the shadow, of the materia poetica as I have begun to see it in my study--Tieck's fairy tale told its story anew. That folk that live in the fir-ground--"the dingy fir-trees with the smoky huts behind them, the ruined stalls, the brook flowing past with a sluggish melancholy", "as if bewitched and excommunicated, so that even our wildest fellows will not venture into it" it appears to most eyes--that is really the ground at once of an enchantment and of a fructifying source, seem now the people of a despised way of life, gypsies they appear in the story, pagan remnant or Albigensian outcasts they may be; now the people of some outcast area of the psyche itself, of a repressed content that to the conscious mind seems the home of "a miserable crew that steal and cheat in other quarters, and have their hoard and hiding-place here" but that is in the unconscious a wonderland, the hidden garden of an other nature; now the people of the romantic impulse, mistrusted and disowned--the romantic fallacy, the right-minded call it. The magic of this source, whether it be an actual company, of poets or heretics, or a hidden area of the psyche, or a source of the poem, lies in its being secret to all who have not entered into its inner life. Once it is explained, shown up for what it is, once the secret is told that man's life has its abundance and blessing in this fearful, rejected ground, and that good fortune perishes. "Beware of telling any one of our existence; or we must fly this land, and thou and all around will lose the happiness and blessing of our neighborhood," the

Elfin Lady tells Mary in the story. And in the end, in anger at her husband's injustice to those people that he sees as a nuisance to the country and their huts a blight, Mary cries out "Hush! for they are benefactors to thee and to every one of us," and "as Andres at every word grew more incredulous, and shook his head in mockery", she discloses the existence of the Elves.

Now all enchantment falls, and it is not only the Elvin world that disappears, illusion that it is, so that all night a host passes out of the neighborhood, and in the morning all is still. But also the illusion of the actual world fades; "The freshness of the wood was gone; the hills were shrunk, the brooks were flowing languidly with scanty streams, the sky seemed gray; and when you turned to the Firs, they were standing there no darker or more dreary than the other trees. The huts behind them were no longer frightful; and several inhabitants of the village came and told about the fearful night, and how they had been across the spot where the gipsies had lived, how these people must have left the place at last, for their huts were standing empty, and within had quite a common look, just like the dwellings of other poor people."

The Square of Saint Mark's Cathedral in Narthex exists in Raymonde's seeing into it the way she does, not seeing through it. "Crawl into Saint Mark's Cathedral like a bee into a furled flower head"; but "It was true that you could slit the thing to tatters, it had none of that quality Gareth liked... reality."

The dark and the light, the fearful and the lovely, belong to the romantic illusion and disillusion. The "O wind, rend open the heat" with which we began belonged to the same world of romance-living as Tieck and Wagner. My sense is that we are coming from what were once national traditions "German" or "English" or church orthodoxies of belief and doctrine or progressive views into something else, a community of meanings, where we are to inherit--all things seen now as works of the imagination of what man is--a thread of being in which there are many strands. A psyche will be formed having roots in all the old cultures; and--this seems to me one of the truths I owe most to Charles Olson's poetry--the old roots will stir again. But this sense of impending inheritance is in the thought itself; for long before us, in the nineteenth century, Carlyle, Emerson, or George MacDonal took their thought in Novalis, Tieck, or Hoffmann as we do now.

So, last night, in this sequence of German Romantics--Tieck's stories translated by Carlyle, Wagner's Ring cycle, and then the Helen Phantasmagoria of Goethe's Faust--I went on to Hoffmann's

Don Juan and with Don Juan this morning my thought takes its lead.

E. T. A. Hoffmann. It had been "E. T. W." ; the biographical note by Christopher Lazare says that "the Amadeus, later substituted for Wilhelm, was a Mozartean afterthought." Hoffmann, we read, "yearned for some signal from the unknown."

In Don Juan or A Fabulous Adventure That Befell A Music Enthusiast on His Travels, the narrator is an author (we take him for the author then) who wakes from deep sleep in a strange inn to the sound of an overture. He is told when he rings for the valet that a door opens from his bed-chamber into the theater itself, where Don Juan by the famous Maestro Mozart of Vienna is being presented. He attends then, sitting in this special visitor's loge that opens off of his room.

During the opera he hears in the loge beside him "the rustle of a silken garment", senses "a gentle, perfumed breath of air close to me". In the intermission he turns from his enchantment in the Mozart opera where he had been most drawn to the actress singing Donna Anna to find... to face the Lady of the play herself. "The possibility," the author of the story writes:

"The possibility of explaining how she could, at one and the same time, be both on stage and in my loge never occurred to me. Just as a happy dream brings together the strangest events and our instinctive belief freely accepts it, in all its incongruity, as a phenomenon of life, so did I somnambulistically accept the presence of this marvelous creature. More than that, I realized, all at once, that there were secret bonds which tied me so closely to her, that she could not keep away from me even when she appeared on the stage." Then: "She said that music was her only reality, and that she often believed she could understand in song much that was mystically hidden or evaded expression in life."

There follows a moment of hallucinatory revelation in which Hoffmann, the author of the story ("the Amadeus, substituted for Wilhelm .. a Mozartean afterthought") in a sleight of name is also the author of the opera, is Mozart. It depends upon the old afterthought, the possibility of the actual name Amadeus held in common:

"'I know the frenzy and yearning of love' /Donna Anna confides / 'that were in your heart, when you wrote the part... in your last opera. I understood you. Your soul was laid bare to me in song! Yes,' (here she called me by my first name) 'Naturally, I have sung you. I am your melodies.'"

Here again, as in Tieck's The Elves, the secret life is betrayed and the world of illusion dies. "As from a great distance, accompanied by the harmonica of an aerial orchestra" the author seems

to hear Anna's voice: "Non mi dir bell' idol mio!"; then, in the Epilogue, Clever Man and Mulatto-Face, the Mid-Day critics discuss the death of the singer: "But that is what comes of overacting." "Yes, yes. I warned her time and time again! The rôle of Donna Anna always affected her oddly. Yesterday, she carried on like one possessed."

For the author the opera had been "as though the most esoteric thoughts of a bewitched soul had become fixed in sound and had taken form and shape, standing out in relief against a remarkable concept"; his very life seems to have its source in the stage. Writing to his friend, Theodore, he says "This conflict between the divine and demoniac powers begets the notion of life on earth, just as the ensuing victory begets the notion of life above earth." But this "notion of life" we see is the story of a ghost, an afterthought, that appears between our being and the other life that we know on the stage, in the story, in legend, in the poem, in the vision of painting and sculpture.

I

Our figures of the patrons in late Medieval painting belong to two worlds. We know not in The Madonna of Chancellor Rolin whether the Patron is in Her presence or She is in his house. In Van Eyck's Ghent Altarpiece, Joos Vydt kneels in the life in contrast to the facing figure of St. John the Baptist who stands in the painting of stone, having the presence of a work of art within the Altarpiece itself. The patron, the donner, in the painting takes on flesh of flie, an illusion, in paint that seems life-like in contrast to the illusion of stone in the painting of the saint.

In back of that Adoration of the Lamb, the great central figure of the Ghent Altarpiece, is another play of images, a cult or after-thought of Philip, Duke of Burgundy, a 15th century charade--the Order of the Golden Fleece, where his court played Knights of the Round Table and Argonauts in one mystery. The blood of Flanders shed at Ghent, out of which Burgundy had great wealth, flows from the Lamb into the Grail. Christian figures--the Lamb, John the Baptist, the Bleeding Heart, the Cup--become one with the wool that was the source of the wealth; with the theatrical ideal of chivalry; became one, in turn, with Greek legend.

It took wealth. It was in turn the creation of wealth. In this relationship between the artist and the patron, the artist--the true alchemist--transformed money into richness. For Colchis to be present in the court of Burgundy; for Karnak to be present in London or

the glory that was Greece to be brought to Bryher. So, the Van Eycks painted for Philippe le Bon tableaux of the chivalric mysteries, woven in turn into tapestries to transform the streets of Sluys where his bride Ysabel of Portugal landed in 1428, enhancing the actual world with another reality of the imagined world. And that imagined world of the Van Eycks takes on a solidity from properties of the patron's world: the jeweled crown, the sumptuous robe, the golden throne, the burnished chandelier, the laver and basin have a greater immediacy. For the artist himself, Jan Van Eyck, had been brought into such a world by his patron, as ambassador of Philippe to the court of Portugal must have worn such robes.

The reality that Gareth poses against Raymonde's other world of lure and involvement or enrichment is the seeing through lure to the things of common sense and hard cash. It is the Protestant ethic described by Weber in The Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism that gives Gareth her one dimensional resistance. Putting together this picture of the patron Bryher, from Narthex, from Let Zeus Record--but also now three years after my first draft, from Bryher's Heart to Artemis--I see how typically she resists luxury, phantasy; to keep money virtuous. It was the image of Artemis, the ardent spare beauty in which some ascetic necessity was satisfied that drew Bryher to H. D.'s poetry. For the artist it meant the beauty possible for one with limited means. For the patron it meant the beauty permissible for one who would maintain the responsibilities of capital, avoiding luxury and waste.

Remembering McAlmon's "Money Breeds Complications", we remember too that the artist breeds complications in order to enrich: the intertwining and doubled images of marginal illuminations, the underpainting and mixing of tones in the luxuriance of Titian, the elaborations of the poet worked in interchanges of vowels and consonants, undermeanings and overmeanings. So Joyce, presented with the largest gift of the century by his patroness Harriet Weaver, developed and complicated his Finnegans Wake--a jeweled, overworked texture that only the extravagantly endowed artist could venture. Miss Weaver was dismayed for she had wanted some reiteration of the solid achievement Joyce had secured in Ulysses, her money's worth; not this fairy gold or counterfeit of values.

"Compare the Phaedra and the Hippolytus series which were actually written in Greece," Bryher says in reviewing Hymen in 1922: "with Cuckoo Song, Thetis, Evadne. Apart from an added intensity of color--the 'lizard blue' water, the 'red sands' of Crete" . . . but

in Phaedra there was not only the added intensity of color, there was also the appearance of a counter force, protestant to Phaedra's passion,

For art undreamt in Crete
strange art and dire,
in counter-charm prevents my charm,
limits my power

that may be the same limit that Raymonde sitting in the Square of St. Mark's faces, the resistance the protestant ethic has against the al-chemy, the transmutation of values, of the artist's impulse. The modern patron, the capitalist patron, may be loyal, generous, conscientious, but he must also be righteous, and the art he sponsors must be valid, credible, creditable. For all of "wish" and "touch", of "sea-magic" and Circe's longing for the glance of Odysseus, Bryher in reviewing the poem Circe sees her as "any woman of intellect who, with the very sincerity of her vision, turns lesser minds 'each to his own self'", an image of the higher capitalist mind. It is not by her inability but by the very strength of her character that Gareth is not taken in by the honey-horn of St. Mark's cathedral with its saints and incrustations of wealthy suggestion. Bryher's H.D. is the high-minded priestess of Artemis, the poetess set apart. But in the 20s, H.D., in the milieu provided by Bryher, changes. Athens was integrity, but now there is not only Athens. Another H.D. emerges in kinship with Venice and finds herself alienated from the earlier "pure" H.D. She has a secret alliance with things and people that Gareth hates. "Mordant brought me those blue hyacinths. How Gareth hated Mordant." Phaedra in her passionate heat for Hippolytus offends Artemis: that is the play of the mid-20s, Hippolytus Temporizes. But also, between the artist and the patron, between the one who would transform reality and the one who would use reality, there is a difference of view and even truth that quickens another division within the self of two images where Phaedra and Artemis contend.

In Narthex we see for the first time the synthesis that will flower in her later work. In the composite image of St. Mark's H.D. reaches forward towards a fusion of oriental opulence and Greek spirit in images now of the Renaissance Christian world. "I had enough of Greek things, I said I wanted something... so called Christian mysticism that finds complete co-relation with so-called classicism," Raymond says to Daniel: "I have found it this time and with you, in Venice. I never really understood, accepted the renaissance till this time."

Entering more and more into the world of Bryher, H. D.'s major expression in this period is in the prose novelette that can provide elaborations and developments. Between 1925 and 1927 there are six published pieces: the three stories of Palimpsest, the children's book The Hedgehog, the novel Hedylus, and the story Narthex. In 1928 and 1930 there are four more: two "Raymonde" stories The Usual Star and Two Americans, then Kora and Ka and Mira-Mare. There is a new--"precious" it could be felt--scene now: the cultivated love-life, the emotional transmutations of two's and three's, the divisions and multiplications of the authoring personality, the practiced sensibilities belong to life in the higher circles of our society, the leisure class. Poems in Red Roses for Bronze appear not as works but as gifts or tribute. There is no only Raymonde's "Say 'Garry liked my writing,' what did it mean? It meant, Garry paid my fare here and I have behaved outrageously" but there is also H. D.'s pathos in Chance Meeting:

Take from me something,
be it all too fine
and untranslatable and worthless
for your purpose,
take it,
it's mine.

In the drift of her writing in the 20s, she provides a picture of this world set apart by money from the common lot of working for a living, of the poet living from hand to mouth, and set apart by the post-war modernism from the traditions of the upper class. As the artist sees it: haunted by the unrealized wealth of associations, unreal then in the terms it has made for its reality. A fiction of sensibilities, these stories are related on the one hand to the art of Proust in the period before the war or of James in the golden age of American capitalism. Raymonde and Daniel in their triangle with Gareth, we find, are like Kate Croy and Merton Densher in their triangle with Milly Theale: "They are far from a common couple, Merton Densher and Kate Croy, as befits the remarkable fashion in which fortune was to waylay and opportunity was to distinguish them," James writes in the introduction to The Wings of the Dove: "--the whole strange truth of their response to which opening involves also, in its order, no vulgar art of exhibition; but what they have most to tell us is that, all unconsciously and with the best faith in the world, all by mere force of the terms of their superior passion combined with their superior diplomacy, they are laying a trap for the great innocence to come."

A fiction of an emotional drifting, these stories related on the other hand to the literature of the "lost" generation, to the romans-à-clef of Mary Butts, especially--Armed With Madness, The Death of Felicity Taverner, or Imaginary Letters, but also the popular novels of the day, Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises or Fitzgerald's Tender Is The Night. The cult of the poem--Imagism--and the "we" H. D. had known in association with poets before the war was replaced now by the cult of the personality in other circles, verging upon the old orders of high society and upon the new orders of café society, little intense groups of ephemera having their day in the brief "modern" wave after the War that would run out in the "crack-up", as it was for Fitzgerald, of the Depression. "Something not very far off the deification of man is on us now," Mary Butts wrote in Traps for Unbelievers (1932): "not, or not yet, of the kings and millionaires, but, and again, and this is primitive, of the conspicuous young men and women, our sexually desirable ones, whose nature it is to wax and wane and be replaced. Our Year-in-Year-out spirits, eniautoi daimones, whose beauty is no stronger than a flower."

So Daniel Kinouel, Gareth's husband, is an agonizing lure for Raymonde in Narthex: "the turn, she could almost feel it, of fine collar bone under the grey or under the dark blue or under the fawn-brown of his shoulders. She had been so vivid, so certain of what had been there that there had seemed no reason for reaching across, drawing simply as one draws a curtain from before some holy statue, the cloth from those lean shoulders..." In the poem Red Roses for Bronze the avidity is not so tempered:

but sensing underneath the garment seam
ripple and flash and gleam
of indrawn muscle
and of those more taut,
I feel that I must turn and tear and rip
the fine cloth
from the moulded thigh and hip,
force you to grasp my soul's sincerity,
and single out
me,
me,
something to challenge,
handle differently.

They turn, twist, test each other to produce flashes of higher emotion. The noli me tangere, that is so important a part of D. H. Law-

rence's sexual design, is important here; there is also their living off of their nerves or their erotic excitement, living beyond their means, dependent as they are upon Gareth. Like Lawrence, they use the potentiality of homosexual attractions to heighten the heterosexual bond. In London, Raymonde had held Daniel up to her lover Mordant, as if she fired the one man like a crystal before the furnace heat of the other, it seems to her; and, sitting in Venice, she recalls "this sacrificial thing between them, great bulk of remembered (in London) male body, heavy thighs" of Mordant to key up the idea of Daniel as Hermes. The double triangle image of Katherine-Mordant-Raymonde/Ray Bart-Gareth-Daniel is the instrument of an erotic art. We remember from Williams's 1905 the naive magic of "She said I was Rosalind in As You Like It and she was Celia"; but now more terrible powers are called up to inhabit the drama of life.

Daniel follows to the Cathedral, where Gareth will not go, to fetch Raymonde: "Gareth is waiting." They have just this place and time before they must return, before Raymonde says to Daniel "We must go back to Gareth.":

"'Look at the drinking fountain' meant 'and how is Garry?' Daniel knew that the 'whole renaissance is in this drinking fountain' meant 'I am worried about Garry.' The mind, a lily, rising on tall stem, rose out of confusion, out of hysteria... 'I loved her ... terribly.'

"'I mean,' a voice continued, her voice? 'I have loved ... terribly. It's terrible to love and know oneself inadequate and helpless.' 'So she says.' 'So--?' 'Gareth. She says she is sorry for me if ... I love ... Ray Bart.' 'Being sorry does no good to any one, I am sorry for myself, harassed and lacerated loving ... Daniel.' Sparks were drawn into one tall light. One candle burned where inappropriately darkness had made cornice and square mosaic shine like gold fish." The two hermetic lovers practice cruelty as if to strike a light, flint against flint. "I know why people hate you," Raymonde will flash out: "People hate you for the same reason that they hate me, Daniel." And Daniel will flash back: "You have the tortured silly smile of some archaic statue." "I know." "Rather tight. Looking mincing almost." "I know." "You don't know, I'm rather glad you don't know." "Why--why glad Daniel?" "It's--horrible."

In The Usual Star (1928), the beauty of Daniel is thematic: "incandescence of swan features and the famous Swedish film star," it seems to Raymonde; it can also include her, for there is the "incandescence of the two of them, burning with their cerebral intensity" --an identification in beauty. "Raymonde wanted Marc de Brissac

to protect her from intolerable incandescence." In the 20s the great cult of beauty arises in those lights of the screen, gathering all possible erotic attractions: Garbo or Valentino, existing as they do in an androgynous lure. "Human nature was not meant for that strain," Mary Butts writes of the cult of person: "The star-dust at Hollywood is full of dead stars."

In Two Americans (1930), the presence of the great negro star Saul Howard awakens in Raymonde some other identification with him as an artist or an American that exorcises the hold Daniel had had. "'No, it's altogether this way. You see,' she was surprised to hear what she said, 'he's removed a silver thorn out of my side, called Daniel.'"

Outside the charged circle of this "incandescence"--as outside the circle of the Imagist poets--there is a "they", those who do not understand, who misjudge: the general's wife, the pro-consul's widow of the poem Halcyon. H.D. must have been aware of how little sympathy the middle-class, more importantly, how little sympathy the professional class had for this disestablished, self-centered life of the rich. Her discomfort can show itself in the sense of vulgarity about her. But there is also the sense of being hated by the vulgar that she had known in another way as a member of the pre-War circle of poets. The "they" now are the economically responsible, the solid and moral middle-class, and Gareth, having her solid upper middle-class attitudes--having after all the "reality" of the hard cash--can seem to belong at times to "them". In Halcyon we find:

'tinsel' they said the other lives were,
all those I loved,
I was forgot

and later:

I never had an illusion,
they hate me,
every one, every one,
but it's worse for you,

you're a baby, a lost star,

Halcyon is a dramatic monologue, of a poor relation dependent upon "my late cousin, the wool merchant's wife", isolated from those who understand her, in exile in a commercial port. But H.D. too, during this period of the late 20s and the 30s was "forgot", and

where she was remembered, her critics were not sympathetic with this work. All the prejudices of the new educated class were to be against just such irresponsibility. Thomas Burnett Swann in 1963, forgetting her, can note his dissympathy with Raymonde Ransome in summing up the prose of H. D.: "Most of the characters--poets, temp-tresses, hostesses--are either precious or tedious, and so, too often, is the heroine, although she seems to be intended as a contrast to her superficial friends."

Dream, April 5, 1963: "There were things I wanted to ask you," I said. Her attention wavered, yet she was intensely there. There was some impatience with the moment, along with her having all the time in the world. "Did you ever read Blackwood?" I asked, "You must have--" Was her answer there or not? Was she evasive or had it seemed so unimportant that her interest could not recall whether she had or not.

"But I shiver at the thought of you reading the old prose & poems," she had written in 1960 when she was still alive: "To use Yeat's phrase, I am 'dreaming back' but the intermediate writing now seems an obstruction--of course it was a way of life, of living. Don't take it too seriously--"

And wasn't I in asking impatient of her answering now. "I've been finding out the--" did I say "split" or "fault"? "--two H. D.'s." Hilda Doolittle-H. D., Raymonde-Ray Bart.

She looked disappointed in me. But then a flash of fellow feeling was there, a conspiracy of writers. She knew that one used everything to make up one's work. But didn't I pose use as if it were less than or opposed to transformation?

"Yes, yes, I think we did," she said, tentatively, gazing off into space or back into time to see her answer. In the hotel room in New York she had looked past me or beyond me that way, as if clairvoyant, searching some Akashic blank for a sign. I almost caught the titles of books as she searched for them. But I was talking-- would I ever hear what she had to say? I had to tell her how much I knew as if that could make the bond, awaken the full force of sympathy I wanted.

"Did you ever think how much in this outdoors thing, "--I was thinking of the early poems, the woodlands of Pursuit, the sea of The Shrine "where rollers shot with blue/ cut under deeper blue"-- "this back to the elements, back to nature"--I was recalling that story Williams told in his Autobiography:

"There had been a storm and the breakers were heavy,
culding in with overpowering force. But Hilda was entranced. I

suppose she wasn't used to the ocean anyhow and didn't realize what she was about. For without thought or caution she went to meet the waves, walked right into them. I suppose she could swim, I don't know, but in she went and the first wave knocked her flat, the second rolled her into the undertow, and if Bob Lamberton hadn't been powerful and there, it might have been worse. They dragged her out unconscious, resuscitated her, and had just taken her up to the house."

"Did you ever think how much in this back to nature thing you were at one with the common view?" --with all those free thinkers of the working class and lower middle class, I was thinking, sun-tanned, sun-burnt--Nudists?--followers of a popular theosophy and nature-worship. "Bright Messenger--did you read that?" I wanted to tell her how close at first H.D. was to the world of The Centaur or The Education of Uncle Paul. Vaud, her Vaud, had been the place too of Algernon Blackwood's revelations of wind and fire gods. But now I was going to lose it again. There may have been a wave of not wanting to lose her.

We sat out-of-doors in an arbor under grape-vines, it was another time now, some revenant-time of my adolescence in the San Joaquin. "Fletcher talked in his review of your poetry about Plotinus, Proclus, Boehme," I went on, trying to recall the conspiracy between H.D., and the old H.D. with her love for theosophy, and my own goings-on, going-to-far: "Didn't you talk way back then in London about the great image, the eidolon?"

"There was a book..." she said, and now I was going to lose her I felt again, she was so near, there was a smile with it: "There was a book we all read," she smiled, and I saw again the glint of her playful, affectionate conspiracy. There were times in our interview when I'd been painfully aware of how mistaken I was, how little she liked my digging, digging, digging at Raymonde Ransome. Wasn't she tired, barely tolerant of my book. "Why don't you write a book about your own affairs?" she had asked me at one point; there could have been a barbed impatience in that. But we did talk about writing then and I did not take up the barb if it was there. "I've had a book on my mind--" I said, looking off into the distant possibility myself but just missing it, "But it's lost." Had her question been almost an angry reproof, a rebuff? She meant, that's what I saw when she asked, a book of my own sexual engagements, a series of those I had fallen in love with. Back to nature.

"There was a book we all read..." she had disclosed. As I woke the name of the author was there and her last curious smile--"taunt" the word came to me yesterday as I was walking back from the mailbox at the corner; I have to work in "the furies' taunt" I had

thought; Was that in Helen?

"E. Nesbit Trilby was the author's name," she had said, and then: "It was a silly novel of high society, I'm afraid."7

II

All given things have a command over the artist; thoughts come to the poet, images are presented not invented; and where there is poetry we see chance as a donation, the universe as a donor. Chosen most gifted, inspired. In French, la donnée is the idée fondamentale d'un ouvrage d'esprit. The poem itself is a gift in exchange. In these stories and poems of the middle period, H.D. seeks to give herself, a feudal token for a holding, the inner even confused, even painful, account to overlords of love and loyalty. Not only Gareth but Daniel is donor; his the narthex, the initiatory love-death. Not only Gareth and Daniel but the persona Ray Bart and the descending triangle with Katherine and Mordant give the star.

To pay back, to get even, here is transmuted in the return of truth; for the scales of the artist are not only a balance that Thoth holds but they are also the scales of a music, the series of proportions in a drawing from life. In the language we are given there is the Old Norse donation, skål, a bowl, the bowls of the scale; there is the Latin donation scala, a ladder, the ladder of ascending or descending tones, the graduations that give measure; the Jacob's Ladder as Denise Levertov evokes it in that poem:

The stairway is not
a thing of gleaming strands
a radiant evanescence
for angels' feet that only glance in their tread,
and need not
touch the stone.

It is of stone.

given, these ascents and descents of spirit, even the rosy glow of the stone

only because behind it the sky is a doubtful, a
doubting
night gray,

by the actual, so that a man climbing

must scrape his knees, and bring
the grip of his hands into play. The cut stone
consoles his groping feet.

It is the cut of the stone, the scrape of reality that verifies the spirit. The night gray, the roughness of the way gives verity, and the artist seeks it out, for his work is not only a gift for like-souls, for the human donors before and after, but a gift for the sky, a gift for the very hazard in which experience has had its keen edge.

"When a man dreams his own dream, he is the sport of his dream;" George MacDonald writes in Lilith: "when Another gives it him, that Other is able to fulfill it."

Where we see certain things in the poem that "appear there" as Donna Anna who is also something else ("Naturally, I have sung you. I am your melodies") appears in Hoffmann's Don Juan; as the Lamb appears in Van Eyck's great altarpiece, but also in the rites of the Fleece, so that He is not only Christ the Lamb or the God-Fleece that the Argonauts sought, but also the artist's theme, we are aware not only of the artist but of another. The work of art itself appears as a gift for another but also as a means for another to be there. Self expression may be an urgency of art, but the self has no expression except in this other.

In Tribute To The Angels: "it was an ordinary tree/ in an old garden-square." It is only a half-burnt-out-tree, a survivor of the war; it is also the other half the tree in its flowering; the whole recalling then the Solomon's seal of Narthex: the half-burnt-out triangle of those before the War and the bright triangle of those after the War--the two are needed to make the design. A donnée of the poem: "we saw the tree flowering", in order to see. The tree itself bestows the fundamental idea of Tribute To The Angels, but in turn it comes as an answer to a prayer or a question, the "is this union at last?" of The Walls Do Not Fall, that may ask union with God or the universe or the union of all the gifts of the poet in her opus. In the creation of a melody there is a given passage of tones that lead towards another phrase or phase to which they belong. Melody arises in the union of otherwise diverse feelings.

Invoking angelic powers in the opening pages of her Tribute, H. D. establishes a scale or rather a series of scales: the Judaic and the Greek divine orders are two that in the Christian scale become one; the Christian, the New Dispensation, and the Egyptian, the old

Heretical Tradition, are two that in turn in the psychoanalytic and theosophical interpretation become one. What is involved here is a polyphony, proceeding from the choral mode of her earliest work out of Euripides, a formal counterpart of the polyvalence of elements in H. D.'s life-feeling. The poem must find its mode in dimensions that allow for angels to occur as they allow for the worm on the leaf and the star, for shapers and donors outside the person of the poet herself to come into the work. For she, like E. T. A. Hoffmann, yearned for some signal from the unknown. A presentation from the unconscious? But these presents come from outside the signature of H. D.; the leaf, the sea, the shell, the tree in flower come from the actual, natural world; Thoth, Amen, Raphael, Annael, Christos and the Lady come from the lore-world of other men; and the poem itself unfolds before the poet from the rimes and developments given in the words, from the increment of human experience the poet comes to know in the language, from other experience in which her experience comes true. It is in consciousness that the exchange is made; the gift comes into our own consciousness from an other consciousness. The sky, the wave, the blade of grass are elements of writing because they are elements of our conscious life.

The War itself gave proportion to personal feelings of being lost, of surviving, and yet of braving circumstance, of holding to the ideal. The "I do not know why", "we are powerless", "our bodies blunder", "we know no rule/ of procedure", "we have no map" reiterates the old Alexandrian mood H. D. knew in her first phase--the Failure of Nerves Gilbert Murray had called the Alexandrian phase in history--but it also is a realistic sense of the human lot at large in the Second World War and after. It is also the statement of the artist's working terms. Form for H. D. "hewn from within by that craftsman" is the shell of organic experience; the work is a territory between the master-mason, her entity, and the oceanic life in which it takes its life. Defined by the tide-flow.

Did The Walls Do Not Fall at first seem to her to be complete in itself? The scholar may someday find that

His, the track in the sand
from a plum-tree in flower
to a half-open hut-door,

is a track that leads to some image in the old lore; it may be an actual track seen in Egypt, in "Karnak 1923". The scholar may never find the track, "or track would have been" H. D. calls it:

but wind blows sand-prints from the sand,
whether seen or unseen)

but when it comes in Tribute to the Angels there is no "half-open hut-door"

we crossed the charred portico,
passed through a frame--doorless--

and the tree is an apple tree not a plum.

Tribute to the Angels is placed and dated: London, May 17-31, 1944; and The Flowering of the Rod: London, December 18-31, 1944. The Walls Do Not Fall, published in 1944, has only the "from London 1942" of the dedication to indicate when it was written. There must have been a time in which The Walls Do Not Fall stood alone.

These three books were never given a common title by H. D. "The War Trilogy" I call it, and I find now others too came to use that designation. Yet they are three panels of a triptych, related when they are complete to the three panels of an altarpiece: on the left the desolation of the war, center the revelation of the angels and the flowering tree in the midst of a last judgement, and on the right the three kings, the poet herself as Magdalene, and the Child Redeemer. The otherwise incidental image of the flowering tree and the lore of

His, the Genius in the jar
which the Fisherman finds

from Lang's collections of fairy tales which H. D. read again in the War years, and the

He is Mage,
bringing myrrh.

appear to be enrichments in detail in the Walls, are taken up into the center of the design in Tribute to the Angels and The Flowering of the Rod, as the possibility of his name Amadeus--a Mozarcean after-thought--gives Hoffmann the thread of his identity in his story Don Juan. What seemed incidental proves to be the key to the realization of a larger picture.

"Invention presupposed imagination," Stravinsky says in his Poetics of Music, "but should not be confused with it. For the act of invention implies the necessity of a lucky find and of achieving full

realization of this find. What we imagine does not necessarily take on a concrete form and may remain in a state of virtuality, whereas invention is not conceivable apart from its actual being worked out. Thus, what concerns us here is not imagination in itself, but rather creative imagination: the faculty that helps us to pass from the level of conception to the level of realization."

I must have come across the definition before, that poetry, from the verb poiein, meant to make, but it was in Stravinsky's book that the statement got across, and that poetics is "the study of work to be done." To make things happen. And my idea of melody I found most clearly expressed there too in 1948, that "Melody, Mélodie in Greek, is the intonation of the melos, which signifies a fragment, a part of a phrase", for that year, working on the Venice Poem, I had begun to follow the lead of the immediate particular towards an open invention. "Watch the duration of syllables, the tone leading of vowels" Pound had instructed. Later, in 1950, in Olson's Projective Verse this importance of the melos, the immediate factor, was reiterated: "Let's start from the smallest particle of all, the syllable," he proposed--let the syllable "lead the harmony on." "To step back here to this place of the elements and minims of language, is to engage speech where it is least careless--and least logical." "For from the root out, from all over the place, the syllable comes, the figures of, the dance."

We made in a poem a place for the syllable to occur as it did not occur in the careless rush of speech. The damnation of systematic rime was like the damnation of systematic thought for it was careless of the variety of what was actually going on, the lead one sensed in incident, in factors so immediate they seemed chance or accident to all but the formal eye.

A place was made in the midst of the war for an epiphany to occur. The art in poetry is this art. She made up her mind to see the tree. She made a place for the tree. For this tree that was suddenly there, to be no mere tree but more, to be an occasion of the tree, to be just the incidental half-burnt-out apple tree it was.

Prayer, rite, taking thought--these prepare a place for a happening. "Listening for the syllables must be so constant and so scrupulous," Olson writes, "the exaction must be so complete, that the assurance of the ear is purchased in the highest--40 hour a day--price." Atheists and sceptics are right when they say that God is only an occurrence along the line of some human projection; that, other-

wise, reasonably, there are no gods, is no God. Rime too is a creature of our constant practice and attention. That it was "made-up" meant, so we were told when we were children, that it was a lie in some way. Then there was: if you make up your mind, you can do it. It will come true.

In Cocteau's film Orpheus the guardian angel Heurtebise tells Orpheus not to try to understand but to follow. It is a law in the reading of poetry that is a law too in the writing. Unless we follow, unless we follow thru the work to be done, there is no other way of understanding. Participation is all.

Heurtebise is not only guardian but guide. And Orpheus, who brought the poet's lyre into Greece, must follow his lead.

"Hermes," H.D. addresses him in the opening of Tribute To The Angels. Hermes, psychopompos, who gives us the lead. It is a matter both of being inspired, a breath, a being given the line, and of being led on, of foot:

Thoth, Hermes, the stylus,
the palette, the pen, the quill endure

Here, first, in The Walls Do Not Fall, the God, patron of writers, appears by name, the weigher and measurer of truth, the lord of the scales. We see now the Hermes of the Ways, the Herm of the early Sea-Garden, "facing three ways", "of the triple path-ways"--the many-foamed ways of the sea, the sheltered orchard, and the dunes and grass of the open shore--we see that he was a first instance of this other Hermes--

beyond death; Mercury, Hermes, Thoth
invented the script, letters, palette;

the indicated flute or lyre-notes
on papyrus or parchment

are magic, indelibly stamped
on the atmosphere somewhere,

In the poem we as poets are or aspire to be makers of some immortality, that an instant, a syllable, a least thing pass "beyond death" into song. Whatever love claims and care works may have its name, that once only kings had. "I say the syllable, king, and that it is spontaneous, this way:" Olson writes, "the ear, the ear

which has collected, which has listened, the ear, which is so close to the mind that it is the mind's, that it has the mind's speed...

"it is close, another way: the mind is brother to this sister and is, because it is so close, is the drying force, the incest, the sharpener..."

"it is from the union of the mind and the ear that the syllable is born."

Mercury is mercurial--evasive, sleight-of-hand, tricky, a thief. Quick-silver. Back-of-the-mirror.

Hermes is hermetic--hidden, sealed, occult, a messenger. A glass vessel closed by fusion, soldering or welding. Alembic.

There was "the meaning that words hide" she had felt in The Walls Do Not Fall:

they are anagrams, cryptograms,
little boxes, conditioned
to hatch butterflies...

In the revelation of psychoanalysis there had been, a trick between the mind and the ear, an incest or insect of that brother to this sister, the syllable that hid the pun within the word. Care, attention, had opened doors for souls in what they were saying, doors of other things they were saying.

III

Ibis of Egypt, Ibex of Switzerland, come. Karnak 1923, where H.D. sought in the banquet chamber of Thothmes for a wish or a key, to read hieroglyph--the Luxor bee, chick and hare still haunt her in London 1942. I was four in '23 and learning "I" is for Ibis. "I" is for Ibex. Switzerland, Zürich, where H.D. wrote her letters in 1959, 1960, 1961, until in a stroke the letters were gone, the sequence of syllables was broken.

Ibis and Ibex were, before I could read, bird and animal of the alphabet "I". Not of that other "I", my own person "I". In time, as incidents of "bear" and "owl" occurred in life and then in the course of poems, my bird and animal were to be owl and bear. They came to me, but also, by afterthought, by fascination, by saving the words and the images towards a design, by noticing how things referred to them, how news or gospel kept coming in of bear and owl,

what was occurring in life and in poems was recognized in them--signs of event.

I accepted the owl, as I remember, during a seminar on Marx which I attended in 1948. The professor had just said that perhaps man's great insights always came at the wrong time--"like the owl of Minerva," he said, "that flew by night." The message of the light, of mankind's commune in life through work, came in the dark--too late, after its day; came, looking forward, too early, before its time. And hadn't I, as a young poet, to fly blind for ten years--not until Medieval Scenes did I know what I was doing; not until the Venice Poem in 1948, ten years after I began, did I know how to do it.

I had not accepted it before, when I was little, with my crossed eyes squinting to focus, with my round-eye glasses, when they said I was owl-eyed.

A word game. Ibex was the king of the mountain crags, native of the land of Hans Christian Andersen's story Little Rudy, a lure of the heights. In the tale there were two maidens: one, Babette, his betrothed, is human, but "she is far above you," her angry father says to Little Rudy; the other, the Ice-Maiden, is a spirit of the Alps. The "heights", I find again, looking up the derivation of "Alps" in the O. E. D.; or, from the Latin, albus, "white". For the Ice-Maiden is also an "alp"--a night-mare or demon of the dream. In Little Rudy, "Alps" and "alp" are one in the lure of the heights.

There is in the height of my fantasy, not an obsession but a thought that persists, a fancy that psychoanalysis has found entertained by many children, of an other more real mother than my mother. In the play of dates, my birth year 1919 and the death of my first mother in the complications of child-birth and the flu echoes in my mind the birth of H. D.'s child in the complications of the London flu epidemic. In the play of the initials H. D., my birth name Edward Howard Duncan--E. Howard Duncan echoes her signature; and in the increased risk of the play, the name of the author in my dream, E. Nesbit Trilby may conceal--between the childhood charm of E. Nesbit's world and the fatal delusive career of Trilby where charm is sinister--its warning.

In H. D.'s The Hedgehog, searching for the meaning of a word hérisson, the little girl Madge climbs "like a bird or a mountain goat or wild sheep", like an ibex then, up where "The steep side of the hill was a very Swiss side of the hill", where "A cloud was nosing its way up over the edge of the rock wall like the nose of a very white and very woolly big sheep", where "The blinding silver across

the white cloud a little dazed her."

H.D. is writing at Vaud in 1925 this story of what life is like told for her daughter who is six. Just here, in the heights, Madge, the daughter of the story, comes into this "dizziness on hill-paths." "Who-eee' A voice up above Madge made Madge pause a moment, one foot fitted in a boulder, the other carefully planted on a space of dried grass..."

But the poet, too, may have known how such a call can interrupt, in the heights of writing, suddenly, some voice that recalls an inner voice, that brings one down to earth, as we say. In a moment of panic we remember who and what we are. There is a way in the rising, climbing melodic airs of poetry that those other feet, of the poem's climbing, are in the imagination "like a bird or a mountain goat or wild sheep". Here we must follow, as if we could trust it. Or find ourselves suddenly having those other, unimaginative, feet that make the way, as it is for Madge in the story once she comes to herself, "steeper than she had thought."

"Madge found" --but it is something the poet found too-- "that it's better never to stop and think in the middle of a path that goes up the side of a hill or down the side of a hill like a snail-track on a house wall."

For where our feet are on the ground, how unreal it seems that heads are in the clouds.

The other, as early as the alphabet animal I-is-for-Ibex, was there in the nursery. The figure of an Ibis, of the Ibis-headed wisdom. Not on my building block, but on the page in my grandmother's book. It was an emblem of my parent's world. There was then in the beginning the sense that this bird brought with it, him, a reminder of how I did not understand what was going on around me. In the adult world there were always hermetic, sealed, meanings. Beyond my ken. The marsh or river bird, with its long stalk-legs and its fantastic long curved beak, was holy, was adult, was a word in a language we would not read, hieroglyph.

Was there, in old Mrs. Roger's anteroom, in the room of the Elder Brother as they called her, or Teacher, where I waited while my mother went thru to the other room... was there a stuffed ibis? or heron? Or a screen with an ibis--no--a heron on it?

"Now Madame Beaupère said hérisson, which is the French and the Swiss-French for hedgehog. Madge, who understood most anybody's French, somehow for the moment couldn't remember just what was a hérisson. Some kind of heron, perhaps, she thought."

It was a screen. The shadowy little scene has stayed with

me since I was six or seven, because I was guilty of something that I can't recall clearly. I looked behind the screen and saw--was it a wash-basin and pitcher on a table, a lavatory? the laver and kettle of Van Eyck's altarpiece at Ghent? I thought later I had seen a chamber-pot, and that this was what was unmentionable. One didn't mention going to the bathroom, I had been taught.

The door to the inner chamber had a double or triple bead curtain which obscured the opening. When they had meetings, I think my mother explained, this was the Veil of Isis.

"Iris; I don't really think of iris here," Helen Fairwood says in Secret Name: "It's so essentially a Greek flower. But Isis, it's almost the same thing." However, it was really of the birds she thought.

In Cocteau's Orpheus the poet and his angel Heurtebise and his death go thru a mirror as if thru water. Into glory and terror. When Orpheus is returned to life, separated from his angel and his death, he is, in the movie, an ordinary man writing poetry, a facteur of literature. The other, the beyond, has left him. "Let him return to his mire," Heurtebise says.

These others--my parents, my grandmother, and the Elder Brother, old Mrs. Rogers, were not poets. They were--what everybody laughs at California for breeding--middle-class occultists. Grief in the loss of her first two children had brought my grandmother to the spiritualists' tables of the seventies. In the twenties of our century, forty years later, passions, wishes, thoughtfulness, vanity, wisdom, hopes and despairs in my family were colored in terms of this despised way--in terms of reincarnation, astrology, and initiation. It was a muddling of an other world and this world, the mirror, and the mire.

Their master was the magnetic old lady who lived in this stuffy little apartment that they called-- no, I don't know that, but I suspect-- that just this little suite of rooms, this plan of inner chamber and outer chamber, was also the temple of that god Thoth, the Ibis-headed man, of Osiris and Isis. I was in the waiting room.

As I write now, I am in the waiting room again. I do not see any more than my eyes saw. My eyes have seen the veil, the double or triple moving depths of bead curtain, that in my work may still be my fascination with the movement of meaning beyond or behind

meaning, of shifting vowels and consonants--beads of sound, of separate strands that convey the feeling of one weave. Of words games then. Of Ibex, Ibis, Isis.

In Charles Olson's warning to me in 1954 Against Wisdom As Such, he writes: "I wanted to say that San Francisco seems to have become an ecole des Sages ou Mages as ominous as Ojai, L. A."

There is something about looking behind things. There is the fact that I am not an occultist or a mystic but a poet, a maker-up-of things.

Gerrit Lansing

from THE MILK OF THE STARS FROM HER PAPS

Et la lune descend toujours sur le temple qui fût

When barbarous and coldly bright and viper' s bugloss blue
you lay beneath the groined vault
and read your image in my eyes,
enactment of a memory that was still desire,
did you contrive an issue which was out of time as out of mind?
It was no specious legacy
but happy change of mutual inductances or charge,
veritable variocouplers in the kitchen of concomitance,
the feeling you below me, and of IT and THAT as good and strong as
any holy book makes out.

Udgita. It was out,

a moon that lay washed up upon our virgin beach,

belonged to us,

white and perfect in its double usufruct and reference,

a model,

a clarity of style.

Hands and legends do not fail.

In the haunted temple, the snakes below the ground were still;
beau clair de lune;

tops of radiance enjoyed themselves on cup and lance.

Came alive, the classic scene;
the dromena were carried round,
exhibited,
exsultet Domine.

Michael McClure

7 LOS ANGELES POEMS

SO LONG TO THE HILLS // AH GROOOHR
 The Trees

L
A
C
E

HOOOOOH

PIANO BEAMS F
 AH R000HR A
 The Breeze C

THE SUNNY TEETH AND ALPHA BLUE
 THE SKIES ARE OLD

&
 NEW
 meat Beat
 in
 waving heat

R00000H

BEAD BEAD BEAD BEAD BEAD BEAD BEAD BEAD BEAD

SILVER SUGAR BEADS & BEAMING BREAD

Thy breast

Thy eyes

A
R
M
O
R

Thy eyes

NIGHT SKIES

and mastodons
of

ROARING CRIES

and you intimidate
MY BRAIN

WITH STAIN & STRAIN

of what I do
NOT DO

A
R
M
O
R

THY BREAST

THIS IS NOVEMBER IN OUR AUGUST
that wants a lust

OF BREASTS & EYES

I AM THY KNIGHT

I AM THY KNIGHT

KITTENS STAR STAR STAR STAR STAR STAR

N G
O R
B A
L P
E E
HOOF

OH)) YES ((OH
GROAN

DOGS

G N
R O
A B
P L
E E
MANE

ASSES ACHE UPON THE HILLS WHERE TRACTOR

STRAW CARBON SADDLE ON TREE WHO OIL

DREAM

FLASH

CRY SCREAM

PRESS

EEEEEEEEE-HAHWW

THEE

REAL

THOU

I MAKE MY APPEAR TO BE A MAN
B WHEN H
O I A
N am weak I
E THE STREAK R
E appears upon the sky
I &
N IN MY MUSCLED MEAT
I TREMBLE AT ALL SITES
and grin and grin and grin and grin and grin and grin

THERE IS NO HOPE
or fear)) FOR LIES ((or fear

OH
MY BOOTS ARE WEAKNESS IN THE AIR OH
your neck a column of my form

S DIVORCE S
H is what we live within H
A THAT SABLE FROM YOUR BROW A
L OH L
L HOW L
SO I love your toe L
REAL RESPECT YOUR SMILE L
AND LIVE IN SIMPLE HONESTY THAT PAINS
this is not our time, our century, but we must make it so
BEGIN BEGIN

TREMBLE

FIR MUSK FIR

TREMBLE

MUSK FIR MUSIC

TREMBLE

FIR MUSIC FIR

H
M
M
M
!

H
M
M
M
!

THE COBWEB AT THE ROOFTIDE'S TOP

V I CANNOT STAND

the

PAIN

V

A

I

N

in substance
is
FLUTTER

at last I cannot stand
THE FEATHERS AND THE SAND

THE
TALK

and strain I am a hawk

IN FALCON'S CAPE

who dreams to be a lion dreaming of a man POLLEN

POLLEN

in matter
is
FLATTER

Joe Early

(six poems

THE PITCH

the artist trips and winds
up somewhere, iceland
he loves, it is crude
and essentially, with passion
a woman, covered in snow
balls, playfully.

PATRIA

the dream is a place where it is possible
to live, made possible by an ethical consideration
of other men.

in the mind snow falls
though it be september or even
apples, and it is blue
the apple too. snow
is white, spilling on a red world
that, which, is the only.

FOCUS LATER
for gil

how many ducks would it take
to turn the tide blue
and when is intent nonsense?
can we stand ourselves
except briefly, in window panes
is the pun pain
or mirror, glass or water
ducks or trucks, or words
& objects, a man picking his way.

SO WHAT

a room and its dimensions
a floor and four corners
it and
it and
i dreamed i went
a-walking, a tourist in a thicket.

THE RAM
for tony

curled horns and the voices are one
voice, the composition in a woman's pitch
a solo for the ear and the heart
deep, banging away

the voice persists
in parallels, here & there, going
and all the words harmonies
for cracked hearts.

GLASS EYES
for fee

The pasty faced drunk rolling
down the street is a friend
while thick weeds grow from cracks
and the air needs rain to clean it.

The drunk's face resembles the weather
the doctor's face the drunk's
the weather signifies a way home
to the pasty face and me.

Two drunks pasted together
wheeling in thin air, one crack
between them a bunch of excuses
and arms waving across the distance.

Stanley Nelson

ATLANTIC AVENUE

Those Syrian

bakeries and churches, St. Cyril's

Byelorussian cathedral

are centuries removed

From indices of turfdom;

children of Arabs

Sit at cards

in the Mid-East Oriental Restaurant,

tapping their fingers to

Afternoon derboukas.

But that Puerto Rican

Childwoman

with serenely swinging hips

knows in her first winter

On Atlantic Avenue

this is the turf, dividing line

That must never be crossed

by the likes of her. Through the mist

Of a cafeteria window

she gazes across at her lovers

in the Cafe Al-
cazar.

Burning with booze

and disconsolate marimbas, they do not see her

But dream instead

of water mixed

with sun, river

And coach-houses

gleaming together at the foot

of Atlantic Avenue.

The fake gas lamps go on. She moves out,

Swinging in a rhythm

that is all hers

black thudded

eyes flecked

with the dust

of euphratean turfs

René Daumal

(four poems)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

I have burned my fields of corn,
I have starved my Babylon,
I have set fire to the granaries
and I have cut the aqueducts.

If the sun does not set upon my States,
it's because my reign lasts only one day.
Anti-king of the night below,
anti-me of the other face,
he thinks and moves a black sky pierced by stars.

He dies, my people, he turns back in his skin,
he breathes to heaven his lungs,
and his toes anchor him to earth.
His feet are the roots and his lungs the branches
of a forest of famine, come noon.

But I have exhausted rain and wood turns rock,
the leaves turn to dust,
my mineral people spatter the highways
and yield completely to mud, come sundown.

He who laughs at the reverse, ah! may he fatten
on my crushed litter, let him be kindled
by all my life that I have chased out of my kingdom.

He who laughs is the Other King, no, is the Queen,
is the Queen the Mother, she reigns upside down,
it is for her this devastation,
for her I have let again tumble to earth
the gods who embraced in my fields and my cities.

Where I have no eye she sees
- may these be the only Visions! -

Where I have no ears she hears
 - may these be the only Charms! -
 Where I have no nostrils she breathes
 - may these be the only Perfumes!
 Where I have no tongue she tastes
 - may these be the only Savors!
 Where I have no skin she touches
 - may these be the only Caresses! -

This is the Queen my night who watches in my death,
 this is the Mother who reigns at the day's inverse,
 this is you who never shall see my eyes
 in this world whose sun is not for you,

I shall not see you,

but because you are the contrary

of this lie, because you shine truly in the void of
 my breast, in disaster, in the nothingness of light,
 because I shall never clothe you with this deceitful
 film of light with which my people are dressed by
 the gods who sleepwalk, because You are nothing of
 That which you could be, I beseech you:

do not deceive me,

do not come into this world,

never assume a human shape,

see to it rather that I am a heartless brute,

do not come to amaze my eyes,

do not come to console me,

I do not want to love you in this lie,

this will never be you,

never here you,

remain there in the night where I am with you on the one Day.

July 1929

(I didnt want, I told myself later, to love anyone in the lie
that was my life. I wanted only to hurt myself, which is im-
possible. And even then I said:

As an orbit without its star
 I thought myself in empty circles about myself;
 I pursued phantom moons,
 I too much consoled myself with false suns.

It was thus a white worm's pledge. You know that white worms swear, upon issuing from their egg, never to wander into the light; for the sun would wither them and never could they accomplish their destiny which is to wander into the light after metamorphosis and perjury. The following piece already senses the chrysalis.)

TO (FEMALE) NOTHINGNESS

What lovely carnage dispassionate in your honor, look:

in this polar night as white as black,
 in this devastated heart as much fire as ice,
 in this head, pellet or pure space,
 see what perfect void is carved for your glory.

No white nor black nor fire nor ice,
 nor pellet nor pure space,
 this world is well lost!

For you sucker of my marrow,
 you who freeze my back,
 for you this devastation - and what silence!

... silence and here I am, I who wanted to cry out
 all the heavy grief condensed minuscule
 in the one small hard globe of a universe,
 I who wanted to show my blood as it flowed
 when my nails raked the inside of my ribs,
 I who sought triumphal words to sing
 as the ax splintered the bones of my hand

when I amputated me from myself,
 here I am the cut speech, here I am minuscule,
 lost in the absolute whirl of your breast,
 here I am the white voice, here I am ridiculous:
 it was all nothing.

For your glory, not for mine, this carnage,

and dispassionate. It was nothing to deny the world,
to slay the sun, to betray all for you,
it was nothing to break my eyes:
I was sure of you as of my death,
I was sure of the all too clear of my night
which is your body of living silence.

But phantoms of yourself have come,
the silken vampires consoled me too nicely,
too nicely death lived in the shadows of day,
time cursed and always new renewed itself.

I no longer seek triumphal cries for I know
that for each cell dividing my life,
for the wicked pleasure which engendered it
I owe a ransom of infinite grief.

I flay myself alive so as to love you,
Mother of forms, formless! you whom I tormented,
whom I still torment in this Procrustean bed,
my shameful form of man:
you without dimension and free of frontiers,
I lay you on this grotesque nuptial bed,
I would like to lock you in this stupid skin.
Now that I have sworn allegiance to you,
should I love distress clad in living flesh,
should I love misfortune visible in a body,
may these fleshes die! and may this body die!
and may it suffer with me, and may it suffer for you,
as I am going to sleep from now on with great strides
slowly devoured cell by cell
by the cruel fire of this lucid love.

I can no longer betray you, as you see;
"I am mortal"; these words are the sweetness of the void
which mean: "I am yours".
I am mortal! Mortal what I love in your name!
But the day of my death is interminable.

SAD LITTLE LINE OF LIFE

What rots in my heart
is the gleam that feeds on fears
that gnaw singing misfortune,
above, below, always.

Night after night is holiday, let's bury distress
under a wadding of thick joy;
night after night is the weakness
of the heart broken by too many beautiful faces, on the way.

The rottenness is in my breath and this wind
is the fascinating whistler is the tooth
is the taste of brine of this abyss before
the flight below, head under night with its too sweet tears.

no one hears, no one,
no one holds my hand,
I am the needle,
the needle in the haystack,
the endless hay, the smotherer in the end...

no one comes, no one weeps,
but always the same, the terror.

COLDLY

Look out, there he is with his pen,
look out, he's about to explain,
he's going to cry, he is alone.

Shut up, shut up, I tell them;
- who? The words lose their skins,
naked and cold in my hand.

Ah! my iciest knife,
my most deceptive semblance of murder,
is this word: for whom?
I speak to no one,
I sprawl under the lights,
I rend myself at the edge of rivers.

I wanted to say: you...
and to add - no matter what;
but a white pitiless eye,
- and lifeless, of course - has nailed me.

So, why then look for seasons,
animals out of fables, shipwrecks,
illustrations of misfortune,
complacent forged chains,
and all the rest?

Oh well, yes, alone, enough!

(the final poems of part II
of LE CONTRE-CIEL,
Cahiers Jacques Doucet, 1936)

translated by Cid Corman

Clayton Eshleman

from THE LAY OF PHI DELTA THETA

(sections 1 - 5)

(1)

like the lay of the land

Limestone

twostory House, salmon tile roof,

at the corner of Indiana & 10th,

before the wide northwest porch I

the plushing pilgrim

lips stood, Sept 1953, to major in

Music, with maybe some Business thrown in, greeted

by Lee Lacy, my highschool drummer friend, snapshot

of our clasped hands he pulled me up the steps &

in

to what hull, what ship afloat

the blushing pilgrim lips

as if the woods across Indiana were filled with Indians, the

enactment of that rite

continuing ? there still are no

Negroes in Phi Delta Theta no dark skinned men

(2)

I was a pledge ,

(what Indians covered crossed

those particular southern Indiana hills,

is this pertinent as I see their phantoms like ants

swarming through the hold of Phi Delta Theta,
through the still behind

the boiler, in our hell room deep in the basement where for a week

we itched & scratched, aswarm in darkness, taped raw

liver in my armpit but I get ahead of my tale, I was

a pledge , to the brotherhood of withstanding the great

white force, no, that's not clear ---

I was betrothed to the society

of bums you see south of Paul's place on Bowery, it breaks up

good like cud Indiana soil (saw workmen

just this fall on my trip back pressing out tongues of soil, in neat

bundles, as kept in deep freeze, so green that manicured grass

for library walk-on,

that where stood our flame & fury,

where Bunny Rollins & I were betrothed & wed now a library is to

loom,

it works thru, like warp, a cinder of an old society

forever falling, to lay down in that basic splendor

40 in tiered dorm,

little honeys in comb

red men round a snake of flame

(3)

The new library, then, a tombstone

hallowed land

ragged blue welts, like topological blur

swollen ass,

a pledge in that I was beaten into,

an omelet, into that order, numbered finally,

our "class" held out the longest in

Phi history, mean we demanded hell week to come, went on strike til
they

gave it to us, they gave it to us (were the last to be
beat with wood paddles, to be beat with anything
bareassed, choked

on mouthfuls of true witchbrew (beat off into, pissed into, catsup...)
crawling down 3 flights steps to spew it out (again) in bonfire,
blazing, wch the Sophmores fed, behind the House,
O dramatic Indiana night, night sheets of flame in the backdrops of
immortal mind, O passage thru, O perpetual rite, the white man lugged

out As I have it then, we were the watershed of that particular history, after wch nadir pledgeship became in the service of the university, high grades etc., and the nave went out, the mense of American Catholic

(4)

the Sophmores could not beat, so
revengeful were they after
being pulled thru to actives ,

hand out a rubber glove, or
as Bill Ellis put it one night "I've got hot nuts" pulled
thru but not off, they fed the witchbrew as I sd,
were our link with the tribe, who looked down upon us from
incredible height. Phi Delt. men of the

Sepik Delta, rite

of perpetual passage, starlings

against the roof or how bullroarers beat in my ears

I tried to get to sleep in my bunk, under the eaves of

Slaughter on 10th Avenue resounding in the bowels. to be

flushed out. 2 a.m. little bunnies. some still in

pjs with feet, bounding down, cross

cut, hit 2nd floor, bounce-grab

the railing down Howling to be arrested before the glow

we joined hands naked

flickerings on the stone, or

blacksmudges glimpsed near ground on slumwall in Lima

man like a blast, as those paddles sunk in,

the showers we would take the next day

our concentration,

from low flame the myriad leap forth

(5)

(cock.
To know devotion for
cock. Shd I hv
taken cock in
my mouth to
know devotion
for cock, to place
in woman' s lips
unclean object
buckles the pillars
of her nest. Un-
clean is unloved.

shd' ve have
placed cock be-
tween my lips,
showering at dusk
with brothers (O
who will know
how these boys are

my brothers, the joke
goes back thru grease
soap up someone's ass
to shower in high-
school football
tension. We are
all ways naked to
men not
looking at men.

ban
is barbarian
as is Barbara or
Marie, women
outriders to the
community my
father is,
lie down with him
in jaurasic splendor,
we were in &
round each other
olives on the tree.
Rock sets in.

& we have
brotherhood--
or long division,
cleft thus from
void, praising God
rather than knowing
the void, who
is God
driftwood
object brought back
from Florida, a

present for her
held in the car
on my lap amongst

the brotherhood,
men preoccupied
with women re-

solved to fight
Vietnam

Salsabar, laid
in rock the
schist of our gov-
erning; --that

man is to not
suck man, same
ban as barbarian

man is to not
fuck but only
seed woman,

as if we are only
teabushes in some
dumb pantyraid

at dawn. The
tune says we
dont know how

Mrs Robinson
loves us, well
brothers, likewise

we dont know
how we love Mr
Robinson,

we angle across
the shore at dusk
sheer ritual to

spear man.
suck him.
O those poor boys
(kill ritual,

brothers, dig the
power of the
helmets, of yr
Viking charger
which is only yr
auto parked at

Univ. & 12th--
dig the powers of
these artifacts,
yr women you
mock up on the
bulletinboard for
Sat. nite fuck are
the tears of Hart
Crane, shed thru
the cement of Manhattan
& know that the strength of
Allen is he deigned to be
himself--)
o brothers, in
thy simple voice
of Manhattan Theta,
in this frat I find

spreading all around
me, my human
poem: & the
deepest faith

is gone.

(continues

Jack Hirschman

(five poems

QBL

Tender her
oxhide
strong

dark Aleph,

the first in
from Jah-
weh's road.

Tender her
load of
letters

holy and

lugged through
the four faces
of iridescence.

Earth rich

and whipped all
over with war,
the bloody

fields.

Her way your sty,
snort, gristle,
pig of the eye

of Thou

DRIVE

For James Gill

What a whine of a mouth in the engine of robot tit
what an eye of blue chrome thorax my sweet
necrophiliac my yackity rattling spit hiss my
lilith leather slashwhip desire my voluptuous
lynch

I give you my american minuscule in the universal
gearbox jammed up with rotted innocence,
I tear this piece of upholstery from my vibra
sonic high and dress you with sounds the feel of
black garters

I machinify you then deify you the die you power
house rich with darkness:

 What is it more you want love

I step on it, go 95
go 100 go go go
to hell to bust to brickwall and back and
it still don't do no good I'm black I'm a black
man face up against it,

 I mean the steeringwheel
you give me for a kiss
and all that glass in my face
cut to ribbons

WAR SOUND

I will become the being I most despise
the scissor cutting the beard of the street
the gun at the hip of the dead angel night
unless you listen to her pouring her voice
out of buckets of love in this burning house

Who will deny his silence has grown up fanatic
Who will deny his fear already is camped
at the cuffs of that long drawl leading
to the white house stuffed with cotton
and deaths already centuries old

I am growing these poems fists that will open
to palms with holey whirlwinds or sewers
at the bottom of our guts kanals where all
will rot unless you gather with me at the face
in the depth of the breath of this tunnel
and clear the burned out children from her eyes

and start to aim these women at this war

OPEN SHIRT

Hustlers come out of the canyons
dry veins gather at the Box broad-
side manifesters of the buffalo
dead nickel sweat and asshole hurt
the street can be borne only by
love's loveless high and mighty
dream final of opportunists galore
beating at the door of the electric
pussy frantic for the ultimate fix
youth is a senile old man outlived
his whole life in the space of a
single flash on the corner ground
to a diamond bombarded by the sun
on the palm of some tan fag who
stopped running against the tide
and blew his gun and lived again
to walk the stunning way of Mother

GREECE 1965

The slaughterhouse, around the kidney bend of the island in darkness.

A light perched on a cliff over the Aegean. A house like many others. A blood the vermillionest red, all over the stone floor oozing into the gutter. A mound of chopped feet at my feet. A pile of pebble bluegrey stomachs in a corner. Skinned lambs in the background hung with the jackets of the butchers.
Spaghetti intestines knotted and hung.

One of them was scissoring a lamb between his legs as he slit its throat over the sewer, then stepped on the throat while the animal went through its last kicks. Another shoved the nozzle of a tube between the hair and the skin of the lopped ankle of another, and blew it up. At the flaying hook, the pinkishblue flesh emerges as the hair falls away from the knife. After a point it's like taking off a sweater. Another winds intestines out of bowels. Deepgreen and black, the bile speckles the floor. Another pours water from a garden can into one of the dead assholes. Another, because I am there, smiles and takes a daisy from behind his ear and plops it into the socket where the gonads have been screwed out.

Three horses came up behind me, each flanked with sacks of babies. The babies didn't know what was happening but the horses rippled in the dark. The butchers lifted them out, one by one, and with stapleguns in their hands punctured the left ear of each, made a little O in each left ear, flinging them legtied and crying behind the iron door of an adjoining room.

The steeple bells announced the beginning of Easter

Larry Eigner

(two poems

Life
puzzles

And death,
one or two

What
is Viet Nam
past life
Now ?

Those two
girls

Should we
contemplate If we cant
act

how long

the months years to
get well

if they
can

Are they dumb ??

Grow and or

shop trees

and windows

Things in the world happen
 steadily
the idea they exist

What is a child
What is a man

The bodies of those you killed
 in self-defense seated
you go through the road

jar

behind

your friends pick up the wounded
your sight spreads in the trees

Gregory Orr

(three poems

Lucy beside me on the couch
gloats vaguely over her first
shooting-up, the sexual syringe
in in her mind, not the
alone, black masturbation of it.

Losing You

You fled down flights of stairs
your hand on the bannister like
a white leaf swallowed by a whirlpool:
And out in the street people
moved stiffly like dead trees,
you were not among them nor among
the leaves sucked to the lips of drains.

My Friend Squatting

My friend squatting on the floor
is a half-filled ricesack
inked with Japanese letters. I can't
understand a word he is saying;
he is not nearly as articulate
as the moth haphazardly beating
its head against the ceiling light.
One of us has taken the East
too seriously. I try to tell him:
"Look, you were born here, and no matter where
your mind travels, your body will drag it
back into this same dark earth."

D Alexander

DEEP BREATH EXPLAINS CANDLES

for carol berge'

worn out milk not
the word
wch is wanted

wch preys on my breath

wet memory : wins standing, a
place
across eye/lid
look suggests
long drink, gentle
lemon, the pernod not
transparent

all of us : thicken, layers of
lit
parafin burns slowly

the mysteries wch cover origin
accomplice of foot/eye
of wch no difference
grows no picture

black clouds
my eye, inner blank pages
lights, move in
sistently
tho no image forms

or, troubled image
delves more closely
in illusion

my knees faint

face up
fall to the street frames
spit on sidewalk

filth wch on
slime/stone
shatters head cheese
risks sleeping &

numbs my sight

stray' d support at the
cooing . . . illusions attempt at ritual

will ease fish
the letter D what
not the letter D
crosst, at rotate

btwn sinner & glory
in ZOHAR the
notion of doors behind doors

why i am
the only one waits to enter

for the Wheel continues will not wait
even felt at rim
matcht at center, in Origin

as breath, of speech, w/out wch

loose movement
to the Hand of the Holy dances
fingers on table

the dance of fingers
Hangd Man
hops
yawning

balanc/t above acanthus
for hours, for
cloisters

a man's life

spans
mistletoe

to be mistletoe
murder
raw

Vac

Brahma/Woman
the melodious Cow
wch creates frm sound

milk . lactate of wax

I SEE MILK BURN
PRODUCES BREATH

i cant hear my
head yr
reading

of candles
connections wch
born of breath
react to fire
furnace mind of bleeding

preceding line



after
CHRISTIAN
MORGENSTERN



Let the atoms rage erratic,
however they may knock together!
Let the Fussers, let Professors
holily hold back ecstastics!



THE FUNNELS

Two funnels wander thru the night.
While thru their body's slender strait
flows whitest moonlight
bright and patterning
upon their
forest way
et
c.

GALLOWSBROTHER'S SONG
TO SOPHIE, THE HANGMAN'S MAIDEN

Sophie, my hangman's maiden,
come, kiss me on my brainpan!
True, my mouth is
a black abyss--
but you are good and virtue-laden!

Sophie, my hangman's maiden,
come, stroke me on my brainpan!
True, my poor skull
is shorn of wool--
but you are good and virtue-laden!

Sophie, my hangman's maiden,
come, gaze into my brainpan!
My eyes, tis true,
the kite did chew--
but you are good and virtue-laden!



THE GALLOWSBROTHER'S PRAYER
AND FULFILLMENT

(A nightsong, to lead the singing in the Beyond)

The Moon-Clock pointed to ten to twelve,
I cried aloud: God help, God help!
In close canebrake the croaker
sings no less like a joker!

U u, u u, u u, u u—
So goes it ever and nevermind!
For such booming brooding I do
accuse all Toadkind.

So shut up tight, you mouth accursed!
Else be gobbled by the Silverhorse!
He eats you up like oat-hearts—
so get thee stiller, stout heart! . . .



The Moon-Clock pointed to two to twelve,
~~dispelld~~ was my: God help, God help!
In close canebrake out there
arose the Silvertrotter.



THE BIRTHDAYSONG
OR: THE TOKEN
OR: SOPHIE FOREVER AND EVER

A Toddling
in swaddling
is wetting in its cradling;
but out of doors
o horrors horrors
a beastly wind comes blustering.

'My girl again'
cries Katherine
and gives its little shanks a pinch.
But there indoors
o horrors horrors
a-shake the windowshades begin.

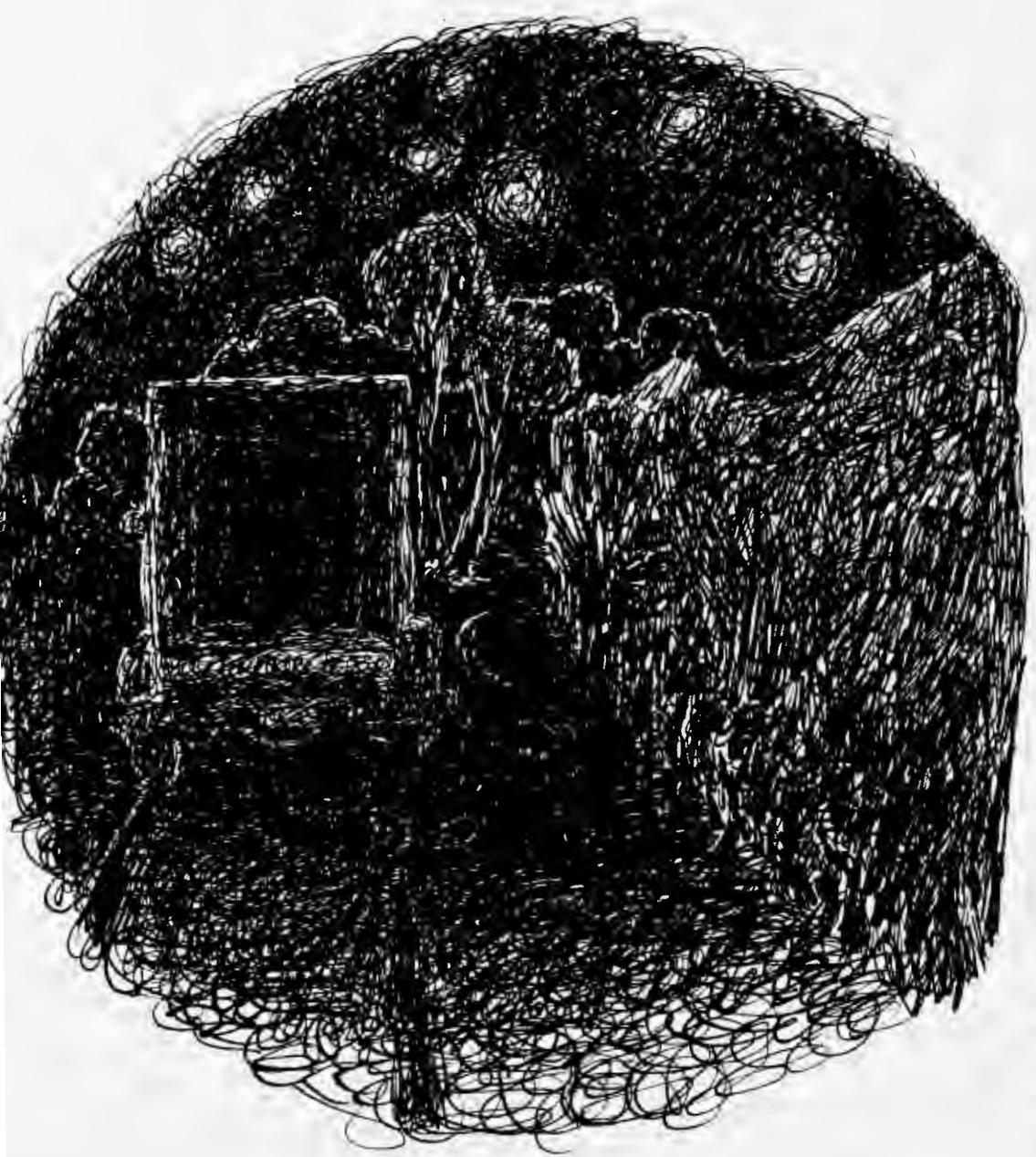
A hootowl brings
a mole a-swing
from hookbeak past the shutterwings.
Cries thru the doors
o horrors horrors
harken Silvertrotterlings.

A wormling twines
the stormling whines
flies down the stairway serpentine.
It cries o horrors
'Doth pour outdoors
so let me make this shelter mine.'





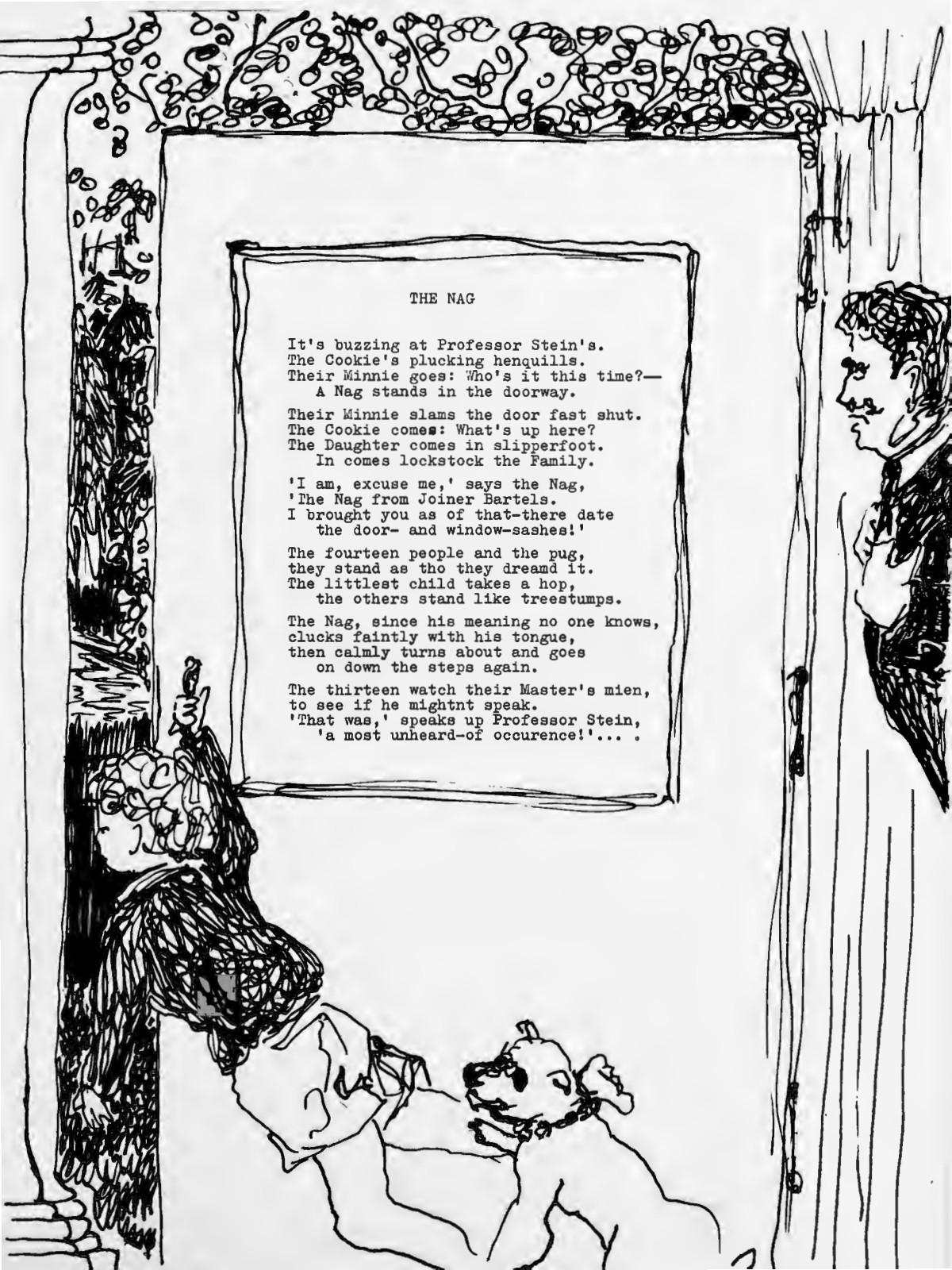
O Toddling
in swaddling
again you wet your cradling.
But go outdoors
with that shock of yours
you'll be a Vagabonding.



NIGHTSCENE

A watchdog's heard behind the hedge—
('Beware! Bloodhound!')
A watchdog's heard behind the hedge
as the midnight hour sounds.
With glowing eyes stands the hound
by a furniture-van. . .
The man is gone. The night is round
that the stars burst out in.





THE NAG

It's buzzing at Professor Stein's.
The Cookie's plucking henquills.
Their Minnie goes: Who's it this time?—
A Nag stands in the doorway.

Their Minnie slams the door fast shut.
The Cookie comes: What's up here?
The Daughter comes in slipperfoot.
In comes lockstock the Family.

'I am, excuse me,' says the Nag,
'The Nag from Joiner Bartels.
I brought you as of that-there date
the door- and window-sashes!'

The fourteen people and the pug,
they stand as tho they dreamd it.
The littlest child takes a hop,
the others stand like treestumps.

The Nag, since his meaning no one knows,
clucks faintly with his tongue,
then calmly turns about and goes
on down the steps again.

The thirteen watch their Master's mien,
to see if he mightnt speak.
'That was,' speaks up Professor Stein,
'a most unheard-of occurence!'....



K M 21

A Raven sat upon a milestone
and calld Ka-em-two-one, Ka-em-two-one. . .

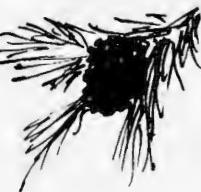
The Werhound trotted by, in mouth a bone,
the Raven calld Ka-em-two-one, two-one.

The Cone-shaped Pig came dawdling along,
the Raven calld and calld Ka-em-two-one.

'He's one possessd!'—there was agreement shown.
'Someone should come to lead him off this stone!'

Two Rabbits brought him to the Cabbagepatch.
His brain was quite upset and soft as wax.

And dying still he calld (then died away) his own
Ka-em-two-one, Ka-em, Ka-em-two-one.



THE TWO ROOTS

Twe grand old firtreeerets
Compare notes in the weeds.

What doth high in treetop sound
is bruited here from underground.

An elder chipmunk sits in view
and knits up stockings for the two.

The one says: k'nit. The other says: k'not.
That is enuf for one night.



Kenneth Irby

S U I T E
for Robert Kelly

*

ON THE PORCH LISTENING TO LA MER

from dawn to noon on the sea
all those hours

is it summer, solstice, long days?
traversed in these 9 minutes

from the porch top west the ocean lies
in sight a straight shot 15 miles

play of the waves
obedient to the same pulse perceptible
this far away, only slight specks show, as up close, all
the inner curling of each lip's edge

spray intersections

caps

the autumn equinox 2 days away, we are on
the verge of equality

sunrise to sunset 12 hours, dawn to noon 6
all this play and now the dialogue of wind and sea
the afternoon's? 7 minutes each, 14 all told
to encompass the 6 more hours

or night time? but it is
the sun's light endlessly on those waves, surely
sounding in all these 23-odd minutes

the tides' rising and falling
strung by the moon in her
daylight hiding

O Masters of the light and sea and sea within
 raise all these imprecise discernings of your powers
 up to the exactitude of just the sight of you

instant of the body's swing
 up to the sun come to the grand division of the waning year
 come into Libra, balancer holder and held
 swings of the body
 balance of every sign
 balance of the seasons
 in the mind
understanding the world, that is
being equal to it

*

The heat of the day has receded, and the light
 after sunset has started into orange and dark

the gaps and openings of silhouetted trees show
 the brand of descent, disappearance, horizon
 holding
 up to the dark
 holding up the hand aflame
 to the turning-away earth

Did we stand here and watch the evening star together?
 does it matter, for all the other times
 talking on this balcony or porch, facing
 the West and its close ocean

such certain links

as the instant observation of
 the bodies in the heavens makes
 remembrance, ties through their bodies
 to our own, of musculature and smell
 this pen pushed
 to this not certain but in the push
 crossing of the thought and evening star, plain
 of brain and beyond sight

trees rise up
 through which the evening star

must shine there over your Hudson
here over the rooftops
of flatland Berkeley

The sight at any moment
is as complete as the heart is
weight against that feather
in the balance of to-be, judgement
already, always, and after death

Thoth's measuring of time
and our soul, all our literal
body space within, these organs
that do not see but feel our way
by heat and rush of blood

down their dark

*

The light rises in us, to the eyes
closed
as it falls aslant
this autumn afternoon, a new
season, the present moment
of the eternity of seasons
or in the leaves of the walnut tree
not just shifted by the wind

the certainty of knowing the slant of light
autumn
the certainty of knowing the physiognomy
Tibetan, in the photograph Eileen asked
me how I knew wasn't
American Indian

 to an afternoon
comes the perception awash

Eileen naked but for
her panties, lies
tits down on the porch, sunning
her body as I had always

stripped it in imagining
goosepimples along the upper arms
very light down lit
on the shoulder blades
and small of the back

a limit of the light, to enter
only by our eyes
--and what we eat?--

fingers along the goosepimples
would raise goosepimples down my own back
and an instant hardon

in which case

"FUCK the light and give me the MAN"
Thorpe wrote me, my old poems
searching for its presence
past any other details of experience

in which case

the man
is his notion of the light

*

What would I keep out of an afternoon
of what moves across her body and my desk?

is not a would, not intention
only the probable residues, but I don't know

the constant tangles of attentions
her legs come out of her head in the window reflection

I do not hear the lines with certainty, a pulse but
for what cannot be an exactitude as I know it?

or now, or what is
yet to be made clear

through the skin the blue veins light up
breasts to her nipples sun up now

shadow of hair beneath the cotton pants
cock arise to penetrate the dark

come and light, cheese and walnuts in the sunlight
certain crowns carried with us always

twos of here and there
looked from, and sighted to

equal and alight

23 Sept -- 15 Oct 1968

Diane Wakoski

LOVE PASSES BEYOND THE INCREDIBLE
HAWK OF INNOCENCE

to S. S.

The stairs will forget your footsteps;
the rain will wash away all the invisible
spots where you've stood;
my hair will not curl in the places
you've touched it;
& newspapers will be printed each day
mentioning neither of our names.

I had passed through the spinal doors
of 2 hospitals,
breathing ether
and passing clots of blood like

soft-backed
red-black
beetles,
each as large as a thumb.

I had eaten the bones of children
and washed dishes for the world.

I had lived in jails,
the bars made of clocks striking 9 to 6
with overtime on Saturdays;
prison jobs stacking paper over my head
filled with complaints,
irritating as a dog locked up in a room and constantly barking,
each piece of paper/ thousands a day/
had to be individually smiled to
till the weight fell down at night
and the smiles crumbled like dry crusts of bread.

I had stood up to the insults of
national enemies,

junior high school principals
and assistant principals
who lived their lives by 24 lesson plans a week

aim
motivation
pivotal questions
procedures
summaries

and retarded my own heartbeats with the frustration
of retarded readers.

I had fallen in love with the sharp edges of razor blades
that will cut the flesh of your arms so fast you don't feel any pain.
I had signed my name in blood
in a thousand registers
and found that people laughed at my penmanship
or criticized its execution.

I had spent years in alchemical experiments
and only singed my hands
until they looked like a winter poplar at dusk.

But it was not until I met you,
who were my husband for 2 short years,
whose love was like the full moon on a night of total eclipse,
whose mind was like a flash flood,
whose eyes were like the sound of coyotes in the Southern California
hills 20 years ago,
whose words were a fire escape in a burning building
whose boldness lifted me as a hawk would a snake
 before he flings it
 down on the ground
 to bash the life out of it,

whose madness captured me
 in the collapsing tunnel of my own defenses;
that world that had bled me,
 jailed me,
 starved me,
 laughed at me,
 rejected me,

was one I could feel
at last
I could feel
getting at me,
as you might feel the hot smokey air from
a burning room creeping under the door crack
in the room where you've been defending yourself.
It was not until I met you

that the door broke down
--or I opened it--
and my innocence was consumed,
burned away.
You, who are listening to me now,
some walk leaving your prints in snow,
or soot from burning buildings,
some in jade from the stylized places you travel,
or ink that you've spilled in keeping accounts,
you know, I cannot doubt,
how indefinable the borders of countries are,
how easy to walk and find yourself having been in two countries or
two states, sometimes one foot in one
the other foot in another.
You know how the worst ravages of childhood
in some ways never touch you,
while a feather or a leaf falling by chance as you walk on the street
at a later time, may bruise you
break your arm
or destroy your life.
When we are innocent,
we know nothing about innocence,
live everything the hard way.
And it protects us.
It seemed as if I had been through all the possible
terrors; and meeting this one man
would relieve them all.
But that leaf, that feather,
something
must have pushed down my door.
No longer did the crystal pane surround me.
No longer could it protect me.
No longer could I walk in those same
impossible places
without realizing
their danger.
And that is the secret
--if the word could be used to mean
- reason
formula
explanation
of why I can't have you
in my life

why I can't dream of you like a sunset
suffusing the hills & a face
in reds, golds
 purples

Why I can't even desire you
or credit you with the magnificent passion you have.

You hurt me.

You locked me in a room and took away my glasses when you found me reading a book by a man you hated;
you pounded my head against the floor when I wouldn't change my name;
you tried to lock me away in a mental institution when I wanted to go away to a writer's conference for 2 weeks;
you called up my old friends and said you'd castrate them if they talked to me;
you hit me in the mouth every time I disagreed with you;
you would not let me answer the phone or open my own mail;
you threw out poems & letters that were from or about other men;
you created enormous debts and ridiculed me for worrying about them;
you made me feel guilty about everything in a way even an evil parent could not have been able;
you hurt me,
and each time I wondered
"what have I done wrong this time?"
And as long as I retained my innocence,
I believed I needed you,
felt I wanted you,
could not,
would not,
terminate the madness;
it was you,
in fact,
who had to do that,
sent me away
& knew it was final.

I have reached the age of 30,
but feel each moment of my life
has been clawed out
as if I were making a hole around
myself,
in which I could breathe.
Every breath has been labored for.

Every freedom paid for once & again.
 But suffering protects people.
 Keeps them involved in the situation at hand.
 Does not allow the mind to wander
 or become cynical.
 Innocence is suffering
 and the loss of that innocence
 is something to fear.
 But the poem can take its place
 in this world.

Jewels dropped on the stairs
 or growing on bushes & trees
 remind me of your unreality.
 The ivory-braceleted hand
 picking up a pomegranate
 which when opened
 gleams,
 with its rows of translucent seeds,
 ready to be transplanted,
 as a new kind of heart.
 This could be my different life.
 The faces on letters which bite at my fingers
 when I tear the paper
 and read out words, hard as green walnuts
 that would stain my fingers if I could touch them,
 are your voice
 which left such stains, long & streaked across
 my face.
 The lesson of innocence:
 that love is not inevitable
 but must, like other good things
 be chosen
 to make any sense
 Not only the stairs,
 but my ears, muffling as soft towels,
 will forget your footsteps.
 The only traces rain will not wash away
 are the jade prints left in Chinese poems.
 Old hair falls out of old follicles
 and more grows in.
 The newspaper is not the poem
 of our time.
 Remember the walls
 of hospitals.

Every flower is a diary.
A mountain is a history; our bones
may constitute,
if we're lucky,
an interesting story.
Love passes over innocence
beyond the incredible hawk which is the world
ready to tear us apart,
teaches us the meaning of something
once it is past.

Adrienne Rich

THE BURNING OF PAPER INSTEAD OF CHILDREN

"I was in danger of verbalizing
my moral impulses out of existence."

-- Fr. Daniel Berrigan, on
trial in Baltimore

1.

My neighbor, a scientist and art-collector, telephones me in a state of violent emotion. He tells me that my son and his, aged eleven and twelve, have on the last day of school burned a mathematics textbook in the backyard. He has forbidden my son to come to his house for a week, and has forbidden his own son to leave the house during that time. "The burning of a book," he says, "arouses terrible sensations in me, memories of Hitler: there are few things that can upset me so much as the idea of burning a book."

Back: the library, walled
with green Britannicas
looking again
for MELANCOLIA, the baffled woman
in Dürer's Sämmtliche Kunst

the crocodiles in Herodotus
the Book of the Dead
the Trial of Jeanne d' Arc, so blue
I think, It is her color
and they take the book away
because I dream of her too often

love and cruelty in that house
and knowledge of the oppressor

I know it hurts to burn

2.

To imagine an age of silence
or few words
a time of chemistry and music

touch

the hollows above your buttocks
traced by my hand
or, hair is like flesh, you said
grasping mine

an age of long silences

relief

from that tongue, that slab of limestone
or reinforced concrete
fanatics and traders
lugged to this coast wild-green clay-red
utterly since creation breathing
in signals of smoke
sweep of the wind

knowledge of the oppressor:
this is the oppressor's language

yet I need it to talk to you

3.

People suffer highly in poverty and it takes dignity and intelligence
to overcome this suffering. Some of the suffering are: a child did
not had dinner last night: a child steal because he did not have money
to buy it; to hear a mother say she do not have money to buy food for
her children and to see a child without cloth it will make tears in your
eyes.

the fracture of order
and the repair of speech
a necessary thing
to overcome this suffering

We lie under the sheet
after making love, talking
of loneliness
relieved in a book
relived in a book
so on that page
the clot and fissure
of it appears
words of a man
in great pain
a naked word
entering the clot
a hand extended
through bars:

deliverance

What happens between us
has happened for centuries
we know it from literature

still it happens

sexual jealousy
outflung hand
beating bed
dryness of mouth
after panting

there are books that describe all this
and they are useless

You walk into the woods behind a house
there in that country
you find a temple
built eighteen hundred years ago
you enter without knowing
what it is you enter
so it is with us

there's no telling what may happen
though the books tell everything

burn the texts said Artaud

5.

I am composing on the typewriter, late at night, thinking of today. How well we all spoke. A language is a map of our failures. Frederick Douglass wrote a language purer than Milton's. People suffer highly in poverty. There are methods but we do not use them. Joan, who could not read, spoke some peasant form of French. Some of the suffering are: it is hard to tell the truth; I cannot touch you now. In America we have only the present tense. I am in danger. You are in danger. The burning of a book arouses no sensation in me. I know it hurts to burn. There are flames of napalm in Catonsville, Maryland. I know it hurts to burn. The typewriter is overheated, my mouth is burning, I cannot touch you and this is the oppressor's language.

Michael Heller

(three poems

HERACLITUS VARIATION

today i went by myself
to the pier needing
constant force
to feel against my wavering:

river into which i have not stepped once

--the beggar--

syphilis has eaten his nose away
maybe his brain / he
stands before you
neither proud
nor ashamed
with his hand out

he is not his ugliness

TAURUS POEM

*

sometimes i am beside a woman
who holds my life

i stand in the dark
over the soft curve of her back

and want to touch it

*

three years straining weights
latissimus dorsi
called them 'lats', 'bat's wings'

in pain
and fury
screaming out
punching the barbell murderously at the ceiling

outer tissue ruptured
a soreness
as muscle rebuilt itself
harder, thicker

impacting anger

wanting to make myself attractive to women
and stronger

that madness
locked there now. don't ever
touch. between my shoulder blades

bands of bunched humiliation. in Spain
when I saw the sword
enter the bull's hump
i relaxed

watched his harrassed death
abstractly

focusing
on the rhyth mic jets
of blood from his nostrils

why do i think
of my cock
emptying in you

i want to die fucking you
and almost do

*

once a bull chased me
up a road

in Peekskill. i was
seven years old. the next day
fenced in the pasture
he stood patiently
by the boards
as i jeered:

'die, die, die'

cap-pistol wars

later
 a crowd
 & field shrunk
 to the ribbing of a thigh pad

to the bone grunt of hip
 thrown at his middle

& past the eyes
 banks of light
 jet and skimmer

& both go down

a point reached
 at which
 you are just inside your skin

what are you doing?

*

chinashop life

i set my head between shoulders: bull dog
 an All-American stance
 goring the Green Bay Packer
 thru a film of red
 the asian's unpadded belly
 look and smell of his entrails
 driving me wild

America: you Brahma & rodeo
 roped together

i remember mounting her from behind
 blind rage
 kicking down the slats of her body

he put his horn into the barrio & flipped a plank
across the sand, his unsureness
became his madness

sweet to let those juices flow
' we are at the beginning of a radical depopulation of the earth'

we've buggered the world
with our impossible anger

hunched over you
i just don't know
if i love or hate

Armand Schwerner

(two poems)

slug duralumin

improvisation, mixed-media event,
Long Island Poets' Theater, East
Hampton, August 1968

rise slug stinger duralumin
come
have came will would might came
boffrou aaarn swiiououou
man box shoe girl vagina make it duralumin slug
iron penis slug construction hammer surprise alexander hamilton

kindertotenlied

I'm like what I figure a mole
might feel like in a hole, it's my strangeness
all the walking around after a rain
or sticky on a humid day, mushrooms
are asking for something--their names, a difference
in color clarified... My son used to say
you could tell the degree
of aging "with some trouble." Practice
helps. Their cycle is rapid, on occasion
they're attacked right away by some
symmetrical black fungus. We found one last July,
captured. First I thought it
a new species
but the white thing
was dying into spores. The mycelium's around
for a century or more in the same patches
of clayey loam and the mushroom
pushes up suddenly
and whole. My son and I often rode
the woods hand in hand for show and tell O that
and a rosebreasted grosbeak two Aprils ago and questions
about South for the birds for later and goddamn
I'd like to crush them all now, soft body and wing

Robert Kelly

(ten poems

IN THE DESERT OF NEJD, IN THE ROCK

cast one
bean
at Satan
one bean a

bone
stone
the old
heathen

the old
man who
wouldnt
say his prayers

no older than
stairs
stars may be
older

his name:
the sand:
blood:
blows

the rose,
whorls
of those
romantic

cunty petals
image
what has
no shape

& so
like Satan
--Sheitan--
our original

wind rose!
of no
being takes
its likeness

but say your prayers at me

Zemzem, water (nitrous)

from the rock.

taste

this equality of my care,

salitrous water of my desert

taste my rock

THE PARADOX OF ACHILLES & THE TORTOISE

**He loved it was
Polyxena**

she ran
faster than love
could honorably follow

& love is
honor
able.

Desire led me
through the city gates

I loved no one
arrows took me

shot
i.e., at the gates again
those famous ravening gates

where tired old men watched beauty slay

nakedbreasted strutting on the dusty field.

The poisoned tip
He showed his heels
was leaving town when her
brother

defended his various
honors with a remarkably
nicely placed shaft,

her brother, i. e., man who cant touch her
or any of the famous beautiful women of Troy his sisters.

And my favorite after Helen
is Kassandra

who stripped her robes of power off
& stood naked on the ground
a simple woman,

no oracles, no dignity
but her body fullweighted on the ground, going to die.

This
in another city

where she waited at the Lion Gates
for the only kind of death

could find a woman
alone in her body.

She was killed by notorious Klytaimnestra,
Helen's sister,
who must have been
beautiful too.

Of Weaponry

flaked from tortoise
cores
chert
hard diorite

clipped
from an antler
prong no
stag
carried

new tooth
in the world's
fat mouth

whereas
earliest Latina
is knifeblade
(not even
hilt) says
So&so made me

a good knife
cut kill
& so make
full of talk

my maker's name

(Civilization "as we know it" begins not with the manufacture of weapons as such but with the shift of such manufacture to produce weapons specifically to kill men. The roman gladius of conceivable use only in human combat. Since any weapon that can kill aurochs or lion can surely kill man, it seems a work of supererogation to fashion, but thus a telltale fashion, man-swords, man-spears & battle axes.)

AN DIE FERNE GELIEBTE

Ea - Enki - Enlil

/cf Thierens, on
Babylonian Astrology/

air over sea over

who is that rapt figure on the white throne
gesturing
back into the western lands, the cycle?

the world
was ever a garden

(did Williams know that, did he abide
the unrich nerve-sick lives gave
images for poetry? Not Charles, old Dr Bill,
did he know what Sophokles knew
that the beauty is in the anguish
chosen, not the evasion of,

even if it meant letting the wife know
you're fucking the ears off

every

no, not every

one.

Male is Odd.

Ea on air, we live on

(what comes through)

air,

Enki, whose sea he said was garden,

Enlil he never knew until you stood
before that throne
Osiris said: Tend my garden.

Ea, fruitfly on my table.

No, the song was above the anguish or only about it,
was Pindaric, sang of the exceptional,
found triumph,
found no triumph in the vanquished,

but no one is beautiful who cannot talk to me

no matter what mouth

what
'merciless
beauty'

& so it is on July 4th the inhabitants of Annandale
march up the road in cool sun
a fife a drum a plastic kazoo
a starter's pistol, a Union Jack
held by an elegant man, an american

early american, flag, by a girl, flag,

Ea the fife, Enki the drum, Enlil the flag
of the western sky filled with dying stars
stars being born
suns returning to their places & the world begins again
instaurat novus ordo seclorum

fruit fly

graceful on air,
a marching band
ten men & two women
one of whom, for Williams' eyes & mine,
in tight white jeans,
our eyes on her, mine following his,
following the imperious globes,
the yardstick proper,
potent, addressed.

Fruitfly, what is sweet
is everywhere, is here,

& all the beautiful women I will never fuck
do not diminish me,
fruitfly.

Or themselves. Secure, apart, each thing, itself, apart,
the ends of the world held
firmly in mind, fucked. Fruitfly,
have you been fucked?

Apostrophe to a bug.

Ea holds you in his air,
Osiris lets the drum continue
marking our time, we march

back to the biosphere

O beautiful star woman distant beloved
open your robe away

open

on the other side

where life abstains from chemical

where your poets

enter an absolute mystery of death
& leave no wisdom

(Oidipous, family man, homme sérieux, anständiger Mensch, gimp,
Oidipous cannot heal even the bickering of his children

but walks

into mystery & the ground trembles; he is unseen a blessing on
the land, a Moses who made it, absolute fact of his

penetrating

leaving no story behind beyond

he was here, he is not anymore.

But the sun on Annandale is beautiful,
maple & ailanthus shade my house,
the girl plays up the road

she

filled her clothes, made music,
insane with dialectic,

who cares, fruitfly

through the smallest mesh of screen
enter my house unwelcome
unseen, hover,

taste a sweetness

I cannot imagine

on the orange peel, the brown slipped
skin of the banana,

in our dark,

taking death bravely, my hamfist waved
or my pressed thumb,

knowing no other garden

than here where death mows the lawn
the smell of cut grass sweet on the evening air.

Song 49

let the aversions the
possible things I cherish
gnaw at the root
to honor all of their bodies

sun

sun in a bush
waking all in one piece
to a morning
complete!

that's all,

complete!
at morning, after the

night the sun, complete!

that simple, that's all!

gods of Egypt who

gets the money

gets the broken

cloud above her to stop moving

gets a child

or forgets,

the rain & the wind & all

the separations

how does it sound

Libya

turned

to its former

fealty

when the moon

burned

full in the text of heaven

beyond her time

"they call their king battos

that is, 'bee,' 'a king' "

who gets the money gets the music turned on gets

the witches broomstick up her ass

who get the money

(textus receptus)

the god is SET^eH, two emissions of
sand (seed) (sand)

where gills dont work

simply,

Herodotos' s Mena

carried off

(textus)

by hippopotamus!

animal Seth

Seth or Shet or

Set

in that earlier single

mediterranean language

(while the later given over to the doings of Jesus of Nazareth,
koinē for our comfort)

Manetho: 80000 lepers

y compris those with scall scab & whitlow
sent into Sinai-the-mines

certain priests among

who in the temple service

stricken &

Osareph was their leader

(: read " Moses," mš or ms,

not mw 'water,' --mem--

read " Joseph," his

own skin the coat of many colors

Sinaiticus,

sēmē (gravestone -- marker -- 'sign')

heaped upon, &

Manetho = the horsehandler

(mane = shepherd

+ sôs, shôs, 'horse'

Hyksos = sheik/shôs,

rik/hros in our own

' kings, shepherd kings, kings

on horseback)

& Manetho (Josephus says)

lying calls these 80000 lepers the Jews or originals of the Jews,
ex Sinai-the-mines .

Copper . Pitchblende? (would explain it, no?)
the Lepers . handling the ores . the metals . to make . clean,
but the wood,

the statues carved from the recently living tree,

Xoanon.

Also from the earth that is the tree,
xoanon . imaged from the
kilned wood,

'seasoned' (= 'timed') itself on itself
wood to make an
image of a

god to make an image of a
the passage of time is called Man
(I am Xanthos . this
is my book about Lydia
were born three kings in said dynasty
of which nothing remains to be added . but one Queen
blonde from the mountains & worth the portage
the grasslands over
a thousand miles

the king
in after days could season gold
& spur the seeds of hidden trees,
that's all, to grow
"where one ... two!"
enough.

Equity
is an experience in relation.
Experiences relation.

Happens. For pity's sake. The long
memory of the unended War . Sophokles:
the gods

of Troy carry their images

back to Laurasia . lost Lydia . who gets the money
when the lekythoi

stay

in Qorinth &

the vessels esteem uncognizable waters,
untradesmen, unthrift of violent merchants, hippodamoi.

Lydia. Where the gold

simply walks from the mountains.

Where you can tell

history from the waterbrooks

(Abraham's real estate

by Hittite law,

freehold

in paradisum .

Kerem, grove of winestocks, grove of oil .

Pardes,

of orange trees, rimmonim red

apples are not apples.

Lydia where the gold

is the fate . is Fate

is the woman

whose husbands were the king . whose
unwashed heavy hair
magnetic

field of the whole earth.

this flower from Ganges

whorl from that gold
circumstance these
yellow anthers

mandala & molecule
from twelve thousand miles
& nourished by all elements

a daisy.

8 SEPTEMBER 68

when the leaves called needles of the spruce
fall from the little branch they leave behind
tiny stalks or pegs which now when all is dry
form a regular array of spines projecting
up & forward on the stripped branch

*

I want nothing but to work in the circle of my loves.

*

Each leaf a thousand mouths
each mouth open to the sun, air, water,
dark shaded earth also
that breathes upward a secret midnight vapor
that also feeds them

*

the smell of new-turned soil
a health

"Cleave the rock, split the stick."

Midnight earth.

*

Smell of fresh earth opened to the air
the sun looks in
the soil moist with its own effective waters.

As the spruce branch dries the needles fall.
It is water keeps them joined.

Their solvē is coagula.

*

Do what thou wilt IS the whole of the Law

*

And so dance
past chance

*

Victims of opinion, bondservants of subtle educators:
turn to the sun.
Turn light.

Wash in water, think fire, scheme air, walk earth.

*

Begin liberty with the simplest facts.
The natives called this land Onteora.
We call this tree an oak.

Oak tree
why do I speak
of every tree
but you

oak tree o my ungainly strong my you

an old ballad
happens
in my house
a bedroom
breaks

having no process but my own
I write to you
where I can get you
sans twist or learnnd technē
out of the ground,

alright, no chinese,
out of the ground of my heart

26 October the

morning begins

after noon

the almost

mechanical new shoots

of the ailanthus

stripped for new action

after repose

(the tree grew ten feet
this summer alone
from what I thought in spring
was a dead bush' s dead stem)

always

thought it a very spooky tree when I was young
sordid & tropical at once,

malaise, women

dangerous women in white diseases

& pale dresses

walking on iron balconies or low verandas

this tree before them,

tropic tree . sordid tree .

full of absolute life & the keys

of dying again & being born.

The women' s mottled faces

fused with the uneasy shadows of

these easy leaves,

stripped tree

wilful into winter, clean, ready

urpflanze or geometric tree

whereof all others

are corollaries

invincible tree

lining the subway cuts,

phallic in every yard, city tree

lush insistence

of the Antipodes

much pissed-on tree

Brooklyn tree.

NOTES & REVIEWS

Gigantic Gerrit Lansing Test of Translation IX on Nerval did not get in on time; it will appear in CATERPILLAR #7. § Two of Joe Early's poems here have been printed elsewhere: "Focus Later" in Promethean & "Patria" in For Now. Early's poems are from a new book, THE PITCH, just published, and available thru the author, for \$2, at 51 E. 19th Street, NYC 10003. § The first Larry Eigner poem is in response to the 2 photos of napalmed Vietnamese girls reproduced in CAT. #3/4. § The bilingual Mexican magazine, EL CORNO EMPLUMADO, needs \$ to continue. Send any contribution to Meg Randall/Apartado 13546/Mexico 13, DF. ECE recently came out against Mexican Govt. massacres & lost their source of funds; it is important this magazine stays alive; it is the only link down there, has, for 28 issues, kept many Latin-American countries & this one in contact. § Shoei Restaurant (see ad end of reviews) has excellent gentle food. All enturbulated Manhattan poets urged to hurry there, eat fresh tuna belly, write lovely odes. § There are abt 75 more copies of BROTHER STONES (6 glorious woodcuts by William Paden on mulberry paper, 11 poems by Eshleman, all laid in dark box) available at \$15 each (no discounts to dealers). § Interesting attack on Marianne Moore by Gilbert Sorrentino in THE PARK 1, edited by Andrew Crozier, Ferry Press/177 Green Lane/London SE9. § ODDA TALA 2 soon out, free, edited by D Alexander, at 1465 Masonic/SF 94117. § GNOSIS, a new tri-annual of poetry & short fiction, edited by Stanley Nelson/372 Pacific St/Brooklyn 11217. § Those interested in the Grossinger review here will also be interested in his magazine, IO, the 5th issue now current, \$2, at 1106 Brooklyn/Ann Arbor /Michigan. §§§

Jerome Rothenberg TECHNICIANS OF THE SACRED Doubleday 1968

The only thing wrong with this book is its name. Of technicians we have too many already and I suggest we leave the sacred to Mircea Eliade & Pope Paul & let them both go to hell. It is really two books. One an anthology of what used to be called "primitive poetry." The other a collection of recent work, mainly American, from a wide range of interests. With a bridge of commentary, very tentative, so they throw light on each other. The editor--he is also the collector, most of the translators, sometimes the inventor--is perfectly well aware that there is no such thing as "primitive" poetry, just as there is no such thing as a "primitive" language. Then why this anthology? Ever since the middle of the 18th century (somehow I think of 1761--a good year I suppose) the very in-grown literary world of Western Europe felt the need, periodically, to get out of a narrow set of idiosyncratic conventions (postulates). Trying to climb out of the "artificial", the "mannered", they set out looking for a set of human (more universal) conditions. Therefore the primitive, the place where the rules were not observed. They found: Shakespeare, Scotch ballads, Spanish romances, Germanic epic, Oriental poetry. Resulting in Lieder, drawing room epics and neo-haiku. It was hard to get out past the shore. The problem was maybe not to get so far back as far out, and than all we could expect was vastly different sets of idiosyncratic conditions. So be it. This time we get there. Basuto, Yoruba, Gabon, Aranda, Kwakiutl, Navaho, Aztec, Maya, Cherokee, Fiji, Cuna, Soninke, Seri... The anthropological & linguistic sources have been ransacked by a poet open to sound poems, found poems, picture poems, riddles, lists, spells, happenings... "To those who have shall be given." It is a staggering collection. We come to sets of con-

ditions so various we can infer some sort of rule-less (universal condition), which is a fiction like the atom but has consequences in new ways of working.

--David Antin

Volume 1, Number 3/4, 1968, ARTES HISPANICAS / HISPANIC ARTS "A World Look at Concrete Poetry" (to be published this spring as a book under the title: CONCRETE POETRY: A WORLD VIEW, edited with introduction by Mary Ellen Solt, Indiana University Press, \$12.50).

Seems to me the most attractive collection of Concrete Poetry I know of. It is international in its range of contributors, the layout and use of color in particular pieces is excellent, and Mary Ellen Solt has made in her introduction and editing the important connection between concrete and so-called non-concrete poetry e.g., the Creeley LE FOU is printed, which, in context is exactly relevant in that it shows prosody struggling against its inherent limitations, verging into the visual; what it suggests is that Pound, Olson, McClure, for example, are also "concrete poets". Thus distinction between non-syntactic visual poet and syntactic non-visual poet is superficial. I have never, personally, been very interested in Concrete Poetry, other than when in the case of cummings and, say, Creeley, there was still struggle to maintain syntax. It is, for me, in language, or speech relation, that poetry comes into enduring emotion or, as N.O. Brown suggests in LOVE'S BODY, sexualized. Without the maker's hand a stone is still a stone no matter how "interesting" it is: it is not art. As I have tried to suggest above, Mary Ellen Solt has shown me how the idea about the Concrete I have heretofore held is not exactly true; for while a poem by Gross or Giorno seems still no more vital than the context from which it was chosen (as opposed to made), and, deeper, is often false information (in the sense that the NY Times from where a "poem" might be lifted contains much false information), I also see in this fine collection the Carlo Belloli "acqua" which while appearing to be a full sheet of words, builds, thru a rather complicated fugal use of key words, into something as powerful as the Paul Celan "Death Fugue". And thus I am moved, and renewed. This would be the point then of this Collection for me, that in instances a barrier has been broken and more of the world has come into poetry.

--C E

OF BEING NUMEROUS. George Oppen New Directions 1968

My God. How rare and impressive this book is. The method: no lies, no evasions, no esthetics, no appeals. Feeling, complexity, richness all stemming from that source. The cadences falling where they do out of dark necessity without indulgence. The collateral possibilities of the poems' development: social, political, philosophical surfaces --flairing in, channeling the reader to see that most unreasonable of situations, the dum dum bullet of

"....the
real

That we confront"

A lurch at madness, the madness of purely understanding and purely lacking answers so that the world, existence, poem pivot on the word 'curious', that tenacious redemptive act of wanting to know, of willingness to

"Imagine a man in the ditch
 The wheels of the overturned wreck
 Still spinning--"

I don't mean he despairs, I mean if he does not
 He sees in the manner of poetry"

--Michael Heller

Review of a Movie called "The Graduate"

When Simon and Garfunkel first sang "Sounds of Silence" and cars in urban night and along dark country roads heard it on their way to other places, and the song was number one, and nothing had happened but everything was about to happen...

It was their destination; it was an unknown lyrical haze into which they were moving, regardless of where they were or thought they were or were going, regardless of where they parked and continued on foot (or stayed and necked, or ordered hamburgers), drawn without choice, drawn anyway, drawn along unaligned roads into a nameless republic, centripetally drawn. The song was code, or sound-track, the haze growing thicker, louder amidst the static of other bands, drawn centripetally, the code more clear, more perfect as they penetrated the place from which it was cast.

In other words this was not a song about the things people thought they were doing or planning to do; it was not a description or a directive to action; it didn't say to fall in love, or make love, or burn the Capitol, or turn on to the spirits. Nothing was necessary to complete and fulfill the form as it was happening. It would happen anyway, even to those who didn't want it. It was a song regardless, mist over the river, a form without choice, not a thing to do something about but what would happen anyway, and was happening, the seasons, night and morning, zodiac, dreams and rains, environment, form.

I am not saying that "Sounds of Silence" is a great song; it is not great the way a Beatles song is, or Smokey Robinson; it is not innovative; it is not advanced for its genre. It comes not from the realm of people making things or saying things or experimenting, but as the coda which falls softly on the earth: occupying something that will occult it, that will move it into the arena of millions yet conceal the original pattern from almost all of them.

This is, in a way, the beautiful thing that can happen to the troubadour poets, the thing that keeps them going as they spin the romantic froth of the emotions into a tight conventional form. They were never interested in saying new things or making things of their own; they were not even interested in winning the girl. Their aim was the haunting melodies by which they wooed, the mists and glows they wove into the pattern of their plea. Judged each day as we all are, they wanted to know in the morning and especially at sunset if they had sung the song, not if they had won the girl or made a discovery; they wanted to know if the code fell on them and stood all day in the rain even if the girl was waiting and naked inside.

Perhaps the girl has a name: in Petrarch she is Laura; she is Laura or Donna or Sue in numerous fifties rock & roll songs. Even with her name she is almost invisible; she is an ikon, like a face on a baseball card, a face remembered without reference to the player; she is yellow against the yellow flower, green against the green rain-forest. She is invisibly sheathed and jointed into the environment; she is a girl and her perfume is in flowers, the signature of her sexual parts on plants and by bodies of water, in red colors and shop-window dresses, things to which no man can apply directly the condition of the

penis or his sexuality. She is a girl; yet she is coherent and simultaneous with the coda; her distance on a rainy day can make the first words of the song.

In another sense, tho, Laura was not a real woman; her name was merely apostrophe, a form of address by metonymy for the mystery and its pure non-terrestrial source. She was used because in most cases she is as unattainable as her correlate; she is married or of a different class; she doesn't love him; she doesn't even know him; she has mysteriously left in the night leaving a message he cannot translate; his love is unrequited; this is his impetus to song. The Platonic lover can be defined as the lover who is more interested in the metaphysical implications of the infinite than in making love. The Platonic lover has always been the troubadour poet, the culler of our mysteries, the uncertain voice which haunts our winter nights.

Because of its Platonic vision, the "Sounds of Silence" satisfies none of the activists, none of the people who are interested in obtaining things or changing things. The political activists would prefer to have it said that the silence is the poor people protesting against the inhuman bureaucracy, the peaceful people shouting against the war with the same effect as if their lips were moving soundlessly. The silence is the tension of the people wanting chance against the preset political brain. They favor songs with more direct and sloganized reference to good and justice silenced by evil (as Dylan's "How many ears must one man have....")

The hippies would have had the "vision that was planted in (his) brain" be a definitive drug-vision, a turn-on to magical and internal worlds spaced by the ratio of chemical to blood in the circulatory system. In their interpretation the neon lights flash in on the drug-vision, are as beautiful as an ugly thing can be when its sheer creative mechanism is released and perceived outside the game for which it was designed; "silence" is the total received message before turning on, the null which explodes into the fire of the trance.

The occultists especially find the song useless. "Everyone is haunted," they say.
"What we need are the specifics, the syntax and procedure of the message."

The experimenters tell us that the song is simply old stuff, had been done before, and is easy if you have a mind to it.

The song disappoints all the activists, all those who know what they want. It is incomplete, uncertain; just at any moment when it might become political or flipped-out or specifically occult, it turns back into a mood of darkness and buries an almost explicable image in a totally inexplicable one.

It is a troubadour song in the tradition of fifties "Dream Lover" rock and roll, as vague and distorted finally as the endless uncoded messages that fall on radio telescopes and are absorbed into electricity (I do not mean the radio telescopes as symbol or by analogy; they are simply another example of the same natural process, the mechanical image more evocative because in being less conscious and personal, it is more entropic; Antonioni flagrantly misuses the radio telescope in the webwork of his "silent" desert; he is no more than a trite literary symbolist, and in terms of messages and code on the desert an incipient ecologist, like Walt Disney's collective film-maker, is much better oriented visually).

The troubadour poets are neither symbolists nor ecologists; their images sweep across ontological planes pursuing a tune. In the Platonic world there was no necessity for pure action or personal accuracy; salvation was based on constructs and gestalts & the universe was seen to absorb and accept thought and fantasy in a state as substantial as the state into which it converted deeds. Since fantasy could be more personally and purely passionate, there was no doubt as to which terrestrial course they chose to follow. Sexual intercourse, political revolution, drug hallucinations, pure science etc., tho unlike in almost every complex feature, are similar in being physical solutions to the tension of existence. For the Platonist, a haunting vision which touches the physical world at a distance is a reality of its own, and certainly not a substitute for the things to

which it has reference. If pressed on the subject of his girl-friend, the troubadour would argue finally that the girl was easy to make if that was his only end in mind; other things are more crucial to him and dictate a different path; he will be at a distance, yearn from a distance, and sing the song of impossible distances, and to him this is precious and ultimately liberating. Byron, tho a metaphysic in his romances, was certainly not a troubadour. The condition of self-imposed distance infuriated him:

"I detest the Petrarch so much, that I would not be the man even to have obtained his Laura, which the metaphysical, whining dotard never could."

As this essay is about to become more specifically a review of the movie "The Graduate," it is best to point out here that I will be using different ground rules than most film reviewers. It would seem that especially recently film reviewing has been obscured by an obsessive interest in the film as camp, or the film as continuity in an artistic genre. Questions like "What has this film added to the history of cinema?" and "Why is it a film and not a play?" are the unfortunate outcome of too many cinema and film-history courses at liberal arts colleges and museums. In terms of film as eye-to-hand art, still only Brakhage (to my knowledge) knows about holding a camera (Brakhage knows and others blunder into it).

Camp is as difficult to deal with as the institutionalized nostalgia that generates it; in any event, it is certainly a subset of genre-involvement and is finally an interest in sociology and politics rather than film. This is most evident in the instance of many reviews that praise "Bonnie and Clyde" for things which are suggested by the film but not part of its mechanism. It would seem that Bonnie and Clyde are much more in the tradition of the existential lovers in Truffaut and Goddard than American bandits or gangsters. "The Ballad of Bonnie and Clyde" and the couples who go on killing and robbery sprees to emulate the events of the film are the consequences of camp. They isolate and glorify the superficial continuity of the film with Jessie James and "the Dillinger days" while unaware of its more visceral link to "Shoot the Piano Player" and "Breathless" (which are camp movies for other reasons). Nobody can be Bonnie and Clyde by copying their actions; it is not their actions which make them what they are, altho it is only in terms of their actions that the hidden form comes into being.

Both "Bonnie and Clyde" and "The Graduate" are films about binges. The interior complications of either film (that lead to cult interest and superfluous praise in the one case and downright panning in the other) are finally less relevant than the initiation of the binge (i. e., the type of energy and coding processes that bring it about) and the manner of its continued generation and completion. I am using "binge" here as an almost technical term and will continue to use it because it implies both traditions which are relevant (the tradition of good luck, coincidence, and momentum and the tradition of astrological causality and angelic direction). Marlowe's play Tamburlaine the Great concerns an astrological binge; Tamburlaine's powers begin with a precession of stars and end when the planets have broken their tension. When the stars burn the earth at Tamburlaine's pitch, he is victorious (that he is cruel is of secondary importance); when the stars cross the threshold into another patterning, Tamburlaine is defeated (despite his military skills). The Iliad is similarly based on streaks of prowess that have their initiation in the gods (in the case of both Tamburlaine and Diomedes the influence is Mars). These binges are homologous to Hitler's streak and the spree of the motorcyclists in Kenneth Anger's "Scorpio Rising." One does not have to believe in the interpretations of astrology to see that binges operate as if they were astrological events, as if by divine intercession; they have a powerful internal dynamic by which a person can operate at high pitch and tension without making any crucial mistakes. During a binge a person operates so successfully and makes so many correct decisions that it begins to seem as though he already knows the future and understands the implicit meaning of the past. His judgement seems to be based on the knowledge rather than just the hope that he cannot fail.

Most films are about binges in some form or another (a notable exception being *cine-ma verité*). In the case of the film-going public the implied purpose is that they are going to see the time in which it happens: not just any old time, not just any story, but a story about how it happens. The fact that a binge is a quasi-astrological and magical event is disguised by drama in the film. Drama would make it seem as though the tension of events were no more than the combined social and psychological necessities of the situation. Except in rare cases the film wants to be dramatic rather than magical; the audience must have no idea why this thing is happening; their emotional involvement is simply a wish; if they thought the melodrama had any coherent structure other than the simplest of Freudian interpretations they would be very unhappy. And if gods appear (*deus ex machina*), they are liable to fall out of emotional involvement into laughter.

In some cases, the question "Why?" is simply practical. "Why don't Bonnie and Clyde get shot sooner?" One answer would be that they were lucky. Another answer might be that it is just a movie, and in this genre people don't get shot for a while. It seems, however, that if we are going to take the film as serious and strictly causal, neither of these explanations are accurate; they are both "after the fact." The reason Bonnie and Clyde don't get shot or stopped right away is that so much energy and momentum is linked with them that their plane of operation supersedes and nullifies the plane across which the bullets are fired. They are not hit because they are not there. The particular harmony of the binge causes a discordance between the bullets and their bodies, and they pass in between each other instead of notching. This is what I mean by "the procedure of the binge;" we must use the binge as a primary variable if we are going to come to any perception about the mechanism of the film.

Films about binges usually have quiet beginnings; they begin before the binge does in order to show its manner of coming about. The quiet beginning belies the potential energy and its internal momentum; it is a bright sunny shot of the prairie, and the tornado is hidden, coded in dark isobars beyond the sky.

Early in "The Graduate," just after the initial confrontation between a startled Benjamin and a naked Mrs. Robinson, there is a very stagey scene on Benjamin's twenty-first birthday; his father has bought him a two hundred dollar diving suit and expects him to exhibit it to a group of guests assembled in the back-yard. I mean "stagey" here as a descriptive rather than a pejorative epithet. The high tempo on which the scene begins is a stylized lead-in to symbolism. The previous series of scenes was sparse and direct, nothing elaborate, ominous, or implied about them. While the action in them was highly dramatic and even explosive, the work of filming the action was sequential and documentary. The confrontation with the Robinsons ends; bright morning and blue sky open on Benjamin's father in the stance of an emcee, elaborately describing his son's achievements and qualities to the gathered beaming people. In the sense that the preceding scene was significant and essential, this scene is decorative and tangential, in the American tradition of parenthetical symbolism.

Benjamin is in the house, pleading with his father to stop the public display. His father is buoyant and self-involved, hardly in a state where he can be turned aside or be reasoned with; he leans toward Benjamin backstage, ignores his words in order to give him a pep talk, and then spits out further jargon to the audience, delaying because of Benjamin, but at the same time making it more excruciating so that the longer Benjamin hesitates the more he has to hear in the guise of his name. As he yields and begins to walk toward the back door into the camera, the camera cuts to within the diving suit. The sound-track is now loud breathy air in the hollow of a pressure-tank; the outward world is misty and silent thru the vignette of the mask; the people are moving all about him, gesturing wildly as if in catastrophe but without any meaning or necessity. They are all pointing at Benjamin, faces and limbs distorted as they come closer to the mask and camera; they appear to have no control over their bodies, and their motions are

more like death pangs than conscious directives. But simply because they are conscious and their directive is toward Benjamin, the implication is that they have nothing better to do with their bodies than mock Benjamin. Any seriousness with which he has come to regard his body and proprioceptive rhythm (the learned ability to propel underwater) is minimized by the small (and merely sufficient) arena toward which he is moving: he is going to deep-sea swim in the backyard pool for the benefit of his father's friends.

My first thought was that this was Freudian symbolism almost grotesquely overdone. The diving suit as sexual apparatus, his body used by those who could pretend to know it only because he had grown up innocent of his form and powers, his sexuality exposed and ridiculed, minimized, first by Mrs. Robinson, now by this public exhibition. If within he knew that there was something more to his being than this, everything happening around him captured his attention and drove him away from it, his body stumbling and his voice jittery.

Until Benjamin enters the water everything has gone one way; he is made to look foolish and incompetent, unable to handle his life. The birthday scene merely duplicates the impossible moments with Mrs. Robinson. Suddenly he is alone, underwater, having penetrated another world. The sun pierces the chlorinated layers as if the swimming pool were the ocean; Benjamin inhabits his own loneliness, aware of the inconsequence of his body, the inconsequence of this action and all his actions. One reviewer said that the camera remained too long underwater and that the film-maker was simply fascinated with his own shot. But in terms of breaking the event as symbol, the film-maker was incredibly responsive to the natural motions and wanderings of his own camera. A swimming pool in a wealthy California home does visually imply the energy of the universe, the pure force of sun from hydrogen out, the pathos and yet potential vibrancy of the human body as instrument. At this point there is no doubt about Benjamin's sexuality. Seen in this hazy chlorine, it is greater than all the sexiness and titillation tossed lightly at him. The magnificence of gesture is his in being able to want and be awed by Mrs. Robinson's body, not hers in being able to tease him with it (her playful voice is trivial beside the breathing on the sound-track: the breath is the archetypal heart, the rhythm of perception and growth, blood filling the distal points of consciousness each instant, preserving the structure of the body until it can take hold of itself). He is as powerful as an astronaut beside the entire earth, microenvironment implying the presence of vast creative and cohering energies as surely as the geosphere itself. It is his body in a Platonic universe (and not Mrs. Robinson's) that makes yearning possible and forms thunderous excitement out of her idly-directed gestures. The earth is his, is continuous with his body; upto this point he is simply one inhabitant; now the film physically derives from him and is his hereafter. In a Brakhage film (like "Dog Star Man") the bloodstream, circulatory system, sexual organs, stars, trees, waters are fused into the body and breath of a single organism who holds the camera. In "The Graduate" we can only suspect (if we know such things) that this is true, and by suspecting it know that the camera movements are accurate, and lead toward the center of the film.

By the simple Qabbalistic law of perception, the Garden of Eden is present on earth and everywhere but at perceptual remove. Man has not been thrown out of Eden in the sense of physical removal, but his internal condition has been so altered thru dreams and fantasies that he can no longer see the Garden. Coming to be aware of it then is a learned skill, "an exercise in neuron-firing," says the poet Robert Kelly. On a good film-strip the Garden can flash thru as if in single neurons. This is what happens in the presence of Mrs. Robinson; Benjamin sees her naked and is shocked and embarrassed; his initial reaction is not to like it, not to look, but the energy, the possible implications of Eve flash thru her. Perhaps the energy is denied by the social implications of her motions; she is playing and Eden is not likely to come up in a game. Mrs. Robinson is not an angel, but her body was made by angels; the quick neural flashing of her body

onto the film is the perception of this. She can have some awareness of the reservoir of power behind her body if it were presently blessed, and thru this awareness she can make Benjamin aware.

Similarly, the camera underwater catches the glints of Eden in sunlight and wet haze; the camera explores at a distance the sexuality of Benjamin, the ancient secrets locked in the body of a paternally-guided boy, bursting forth in flashes without anything to fall on. His body is real, is genetically present; his heart is beating and can be called into play. Perhaps in the initial symbolism they purchase a body for him, make him put it on, and direct him to trivial mockery because he wants; but this is finally wan beside the power of him to want. The power of supernal and angelic forces to want, to want thru him, to want to see thru him, or thru any of us for whom it is still possible.

At this point I am going to begin speaking of the angels as an actual motive force, not to be obscure or occult but to develop an ontology of causality outside the immediate social and psychological motivations of the film (and America in general). The main difficulty with the angels is that they are often invoked as a holy first cause to simplify all subsequent explanation. I si only in the most messianic and theosophical systems, however, that the angels must enter as separate forces and apply direct physical powers to their ends. In such theosophical systems the angels physically deliver messages and prophecies; the theosophist awaits direct miracles and signs in the sky. In other cosmology the angels cannot intervene and their messages occupy the same area of space as natural events and physical objects otherwise explicable. These messages are a closed code, perfectly camouflaged by the fact every motion they make toward discernibility will make a more common and believable event equally discernible. The reason that most messages are unnoticed is that they pass thru phenomena that are happening anyway (like seven birds flying on the azimuth or Simon and Garfunkel's "the words of the prophets are written on subway walls / and in halls"). In Dreyer's "Ordet" the angel of death occupies the same pattern of distorted rhomboids and broken shadows as the headlights of the doctor's car pulling away.

In an intermediate system (which neither admits the angels nor denies their messages) the coding may be explained as complex feedback within the mechanism of consciousness; this feedback would occur as a conscious message or directive; as the complex product of multiple syntagmatic chains, somatic awareness, and self-impelled processes of reduplication, commutation, metonymy etc., the message would have no immediate cause in the external world or primary mental processes. It would appear ex nihilo, as if from the surplus of energy involved in language itself. Whether the angels are relevant or not, it is proper to say that the feedback of code is the most frequent impetus to expectation of messages where previous causality was once sufficient.

The particular events in the film for which we are developing a cosmology are: Benjamin's binge and Mrs. Robinson's motivation. Perhaps we could call Mr. Robinson's affair with Benjamin and subsequent actions regarding Benjamin and her daughter a binge also; in this case we would have to consider it a dark binge, an obsession rather than a path. Mrs. Robinson is more as one driven, one who has violated directions in the sky and is trying to regain something in the only manner left to her. Benjamin is more as one who is fulfilling his natural sign, who is softly molded by patterns in the sky, perceptual messages, rhythms and stars.

The film opens into Benjamin's inconsequence, his dallying, dawdling, trifling, literally killing time because he has nothing to do with it. He is responsive to titillation because it is all he expects out of life and all he ever expects to bring about. Things are the same, boring, self-feeding, continuative, and then there are titillations: foods, relaxations, diving equipment, sexual fantasies. Nothing coheres. In terms of a cosmic drama nothing has happened yet. The meaning of "inconsequence" is that Benjamin

can be held responsible for nothing. If he died at this opening moment his soul could go neither to heaven nor to hell but would have to be tried all over again in some aspect of creation. His situation is much more dormant than the situation of Frodo the hobbit before the journey of the ring. The hobbit at least is occupying his favorite ecological niche when he is suddenly interrupted by a cosmic test. Benjamin does not even know what his favorite niche is. He is acting out a cliché by pretending that the swimming pool is a haven and just drifting on the pool is ideal. Aside from the fact that his internal mechanism is disconcerting while he drifts, playing onto and off of potential fantasies even long before Mrs. Robinson, he is at the mercy of dangerous predators who control his food supply and habitat as we find out quite early in the film when he is attacked by his father while drifting.

I used the ecological metaphor here to demonstrate the extent of Benjamin's innocence. It would seem that the minimal requirement for a person to be in control of his actions and their consequences is for him to have an ecological zone of his own making, where he can at least know (in order to be responsible for) the implications of what he does. The opposite of this would be scattered actions, lack of responsibility, and trivial consequences. Benjamin's niche is one of sheer dependence; he accepts paternalism and all that goes along with it. He has never had a choice or found anything important enough to spur him to change the system. The paternalism is not so much the direct influence of his parents as something which they carry, have chosen to carry; they respond only to the hidden imperatives by which the society operates. The society has a will of its own, sustaining itself with the least friction, avoiding upheaval, masking some sequences by others in order to disguise their ultimate purpose from those who must carry them out. There is no need for a person to expose a flaw in the sequences or rebel unless he is being kept from something more important to him than his place in the society. Since for most people their place in the society is the most direly defended cause it is not often anyone will risk his peace of mind and stasis by upsetting the pattern. If, however, the society is unhealthy (something which no anthropologist would dare to judge), then its mechanisms of control will destroy the conscious life of its inhabitants. When many people, generally those with the most important things to defend, are threatened psychically all at once, the result is chaotic and revolutionary. In the most blatant sense we can see that in present-day America many consider not killing in war or taking drugs or making a Black culture more important than continuing to obey the sociopolitical directives. One of the most subtle things about "The Graduate" is that it takes place in a time when all these blatant rebellions are taking place and is accurate on what is happening psychically without invoking any of the specific causes.

Benjamin's state is totally acceptable. He receives what he needs, and since nothing is of particular importance, the rules he has to obey in receiving his amount of the economic surplus are not cloying or self-endangering (though they may be irritating and teasing at times). If his sexual irruptions awaken him to a larger imperative (Will I make it? Will I be able to have something as big as these promise?), the society obscures his needs and sets him toward the wrong goal. If at times he wants something terribly, he is made to think that it is the Playboy Bunny he wants (or that she would be optimum), by extension a married woman: the more illicit and physically shoddy the circumstances the more fulfilling the orgasm. All the literature on the subject implies this. Mrs. Robinson has held this axe, her body, over part of Benjamin's head for most of his life, and at college he learned, if anything, that it was right and that he should continue to want it secretly. This implicit degeneracy, this draining off of energy threatens the psyche of every person born under its flag. At a very early age people cease caring about or even noticing the form of life they are making by their single actions. Deep in their guts begins a fear that not enough in the way of adventure and excitement will happen to them, that they will die without the maximum fulfillment. Beneath the level of

sophistication, even existential sophistication, there is a hurried desperateness; they want something to happen to them (money, success, sex), anything, anything at all when faced with the possibility of nothing: the implicit Faulknerian proverb that comes out most clearly in The Wild Palms:

".....between grief and nothing I will take grief."

An action which is simply titillating to one person can be a very advanced part of another person's psyche; the action itself is without moral context; if a person is thoroughly conscious and willing to undergo the consequences of what he touches then almost any action can be moral; but if everything falls off to the shattered edge of the cosmic wheel, centrifugally flung because there is no center to a life, then almost no action can sustain an enriching vector. Film-censors, who use only amount of nakedness as a criterion, often charge in to confiscate a very moral film when a totally immoral film, with teasing nakedness, is playing next door. The difference between the visual process of unlocking energy and the visual process of titillation is very poorly discerned. Nakedness, like any form of energy or revelation, is merely a function of the syntax in which it is brought about. Many experimental films consider the process of revelation itself, as a form of artistic innovation, sufficient to justify almost any visual process; we are told that because the viewer's expectations are not fulfilled the breaking of tradition is justified. Yet by contrast, in a Brakhage film, no tradition is broken without total integration toward the center of the visual event. Neither sun nor tree nor full body appears in "Dog Star Man" in a context that reduces its full amount of energy; every form is woven into a rich visceral rhythm: not the whole universe, not a play on tradition, but the full known and internalized universe at any of its local stations.

There is finally no meaningful comparison between Brakhage's work and any of the films we are discussing. Brakhage was interested in the physical position of the body, a non-dramatic sequence of actions akin to breathing and seeing. Yet there is a notable subset to this visual form in Brakhage's early work. A person lies in a dark room in a dull mood; he is unable to arouse himself to any action because no action has any meaning for him. He rolls around in the jaggedness of being fully born but not fully conscious. Suddenly he discovers his cock, a simple hand to object conjunction, a mechanism as natural as the camera-hand-eye would hope to be. He discovers it either by being sucked in thru it (the physical act of love) or by playing with it, arousing it, finding energy in himself, building up its circuits, and finally letting it go in a vision of light and stars. The physical act has only visual consequences in the time of the film; in a drama we might see the character depressed and dull afterward and doing degenerate compulsive things (this is Beckett's visited world). The point is that he doesn't have to; he can take the signals of his body in any sense that he wishes to; in any case the masturbation has served to alter the inertia, and in the continuity of Brakhage's films themselves we can see that eventually he makes a world for himself and his sensations and signals are turned outward into an environment and ecology.

A binge begins a long and violent journey; a binge forces an immediate departure from home (as Frodo the hobbit); everything is risked in far-off lands. A binge interrupts a life of lazy continuity by a California swimming pool and turns it toward a crisis. Once above the threshold of inconsequence the person can find his own sources of energy and sustenance in a violent universe or be smashed to his doom. It is as though a conscious form very far from here plays its cards against evil; single people are the trumps it cherishes and is willing to risk when darkness threatens. It is better in the case of Benjamin that he get smashed than go on accepting the paternal imperatives, losing possibilities, and forever expecting spring. The implication of the binge is that he must learn to inhabit his body as the first and only tool in the face of cosmic (via psychic) danger.

The quest begins with titillation, the only form of arousal to which he is responsive;

suddenly, in the middle of a dry time, he is presented with a beautiful naked body (if his enemies are attacking, they have led with their most dangerous weapon). Since his daily actions involve simple fulfillment and responding to minor titillations (these being the rules), he succumbs to full-scale allure. Though hesitant and uncertain at first, he can find no reason for refusing; if he refused, his pattern of enjoyment would become inconsistent. He does not know that he is risking anything, and according to his best senses he is gaining one of the envied treasures of the culture.

This is the way the devils always get a jump on the angels. The devils are responsible only for wreaking their horrible ends; their only aim is continuously to attack the corpus, to destroy it internally and somatically, to corner it into hell, into destroying itself. The angels are responsible not only for the safety and preservation of the corpus but for everything else as well; they are responsible for joy. In their ultimate involvement with creation and infinite blessings they are unable to keep as careful a look-out for the devils as the devils are for them. Much of the devil's energy is spent on subterfuge and concealment, occultation, black magic. They vie for a head-start; they invade a likely host, swarm over him with allure and promises, place forms of naked energy before him, plan his pattern of disintegration. The angels enter the contest far behind, almost certain of defeat; they have been busy with joy; suddenly they must involve themselves in survival; still they are involved in joy and will reduce their powers to nothing else. The fact that the angels ever win is perhaps inexplicable. There is a possible answer. In order for the devils to begin their work, they must also do the beckoning of the angels unaware. In invading their host they begin the work of the angels as well as their own work; they could do no otherwise just as the angels could do no other than joy. Such is the universe which responds to Platonic laws, to Blakean formulas. The devils initiate their attack with a powerful weapon; because of the intrinsic location of Eden and the crossing of dimensions and neurons within worlds they also initiate the best line of attack for the angels, and the angels are operating before they have even arrived. In this case an awakened Benjamin is absolutely necessary to his defense; it would be necessary even if he were not under attack, the same psychic danger implicit in the lull and dizziness around the swimming pool. The devils, by invading thru the beautiful body of a woman, wake him up at the same time. One other law of angels and devils: all the angels will work on one happy union while at the same time a single devil plots the overthrow of galaxies.

With Mrs. Robinson in the bar of the Taft Hotel Benjamin is still playing with a balance of inconsequences. He doesn't want her enough to make a bold move; she is on the level of every other distraction. Each thing embarrasses him; he is afraid his shadow might knock over the building, or even worse: announce his intentions to the culture that has spawned them and will recognize them and ostracize and bury him for his response. His embarrassment is possible because he is involved in nothing of importance; the event is merely sufficient to him; he will take it but will not risk anything for it. He has the embarrassment of a caterpillar awakened in a cocoon, physically rejecting the beginnings of daylight even as they delight him. His balancing of inconsequences continues right up into the room; he has no personal awareness, no vision; he is still receiving from the paternal culture. It has decided to give him this experience (even if by illicit channels). He is duly polite, duly restrained. Mrs. Robinson is methodical, operating as if she has something more important to do in the end and this is the beginning only. Her stake in the experience is something more than will happen on this first evening.

In the system of this film the troubadour poet triumphs over the Byronesque lover. Byron took such sexual encounters on their word, delighting only in the intricacy of the involvement and the juxtaposition of his body and desires unto a beautiful woman. The troubadour poet enters, perhaps whining, perhaps metaphysical, but he is prepared for the first message from the angels, the first note of physical and semantic feedback from

the great reservoir of his body, the first vision possible in the metaphysics, that the body speaks and has voices and signals and feedback even at such a time as this. Simon and Garfunkel are the voice of the Platonic angel, he who cannot speak directly, whose only message is what the body can find for itself, in itself, in its syntagmatic continuity with the universe. Sung here, "Sounds of Silence" has nothing to do with the activists, the hippies, and the occultists, none of whom really wanted it or liked it in the first place. It is okay that is is Benjamin's song, for whom it was written in another world:

"Hello darkness my old friend / I've come to talk with you again....."

She may have nothing in it, nothing in her body, but he has everything; her body which is nothing to her is everything to him. Yes, the Garden of Eden is perceptually buried in the internal mechanism of our world, flashing thru in dark corners, sensual throbs that go beyond stimulation and touch the very cells, memories: instant flash of the swimming pool, lying on his back on the raft, a complex strand of images, lights, little globules of light flashing on and off, separating and combining, the sun flashing off the water in separate linked ions above his head, code like the four-part sequence of DNA but this is where all the differences begin anyway, the sun touching pinpoints upon the water, microcosms, seeds, the words of the song fed by the suntagmatic chain ("Because a vision softly creeping / Left its seeds while I was sleeping"), but he wasn't sleeping, his body, his whole imago in two places, responsive to every somatic muscle; the seeds were planted while he was sleeping, now coming to life, supplying him with the first clue, the sun pouring out of infinity onto the dark sun-glasses, the body adrift, the sun pouring thru infinity into an image, shining back thru infinity in the dark hotel room, the woman undressing, revealing, the events of his life making a dense sensuous present as he lies on his back waiting to be made: not sex as Byron would want, not the soft luscious memories of Proust, but the awakening, the voice heard across several planes at once, the body felt as neither present orgy nor past nostalgia but the total possible form at any moment, the heart beating, felt now as a one for the first time. The angels are making it as possible as they can for him to enjoy this even if it is the devils making sure he has a good time; he must enjoy this in order to be hooked, but he must enjoy this if his adrenalin is to start flowing and the binge begin. The dynamics of the binge will release him from hell if such is possible, but the initial physical gesture has to be made, the wave-length of the vision apperceived in the multiple response of the body to being touched.

He says later that he did it because he was bored. There's nothing more exciting in his life and that's the only reason he keeps coming to meet her, or does anything for that matter. He does not mean to demean her; he tells her she is attractive and exciting, that it is he who is limited. He says "Yes!" when she demands it, yes, it is the most important thing in his life. If he says it with some despair it is not for himself but for a world which should be made so limited.

As double entendre the song "Sounds of Silence" is the key to the code; the message, occupying the same area of space as other objects, is silent to those who don't know about it. Benjamin wants to have words with Mrs. Robinson, wants to give the code voice. Because there are no words said while they have their sex, however, he is able to receive in the man-woman silence the clear physical messages of his own sexuality. Because she doesn't want love, or someone to talk to away from home, the experience is much more like masturbating than making love, and he is with a woman he would very likely be masturbating over. In the Brakhage film the heart is set beating by sexual intercourse, and tho this is not a meeting of the same order, Benjamin is in such a position as to have his heart set going by it, not only once but again and again.

Unlike a fantasy, this series of meetings has lingering touches of reality, aftertastes that are not altogether part of his own privacy. However, these are remarkably few compared to what they might be and given what is engaged in. All things considered, he

is coming off very well, his fantasy in full bloom and his body functioning. The hope of the devils comes true: Benjamin finally can't tell the difference between fantasy and reality; he has been made vulnerable to a multitude of attacks at a very small risk; he is becoming bored and discontent. Yet he suspects nothing, and in his own terms he is not threatened, or he is threatened only by trivial things, like his mother finding out.

We must now discuss Mrs. Robinson's motivation. It would seem quite insufficient to explain her actions by loneliness, sexual dissatisfaction, or fetischism for young boys. If there are angels and possibilities for change in a buried and spent life, Mrs. Robinson has long ago given them up and they have left her from sheer frustration. She is no longer responsive to the feedback code in her body and the only syntagmatic chain she follows is once of social niceties. A person whom the angels have abandoned is open both to entropy and the devils (especially if they have enough energy left, enough kick to be a juicy target). If Mrs. Robinson is a tool of devils, they are not the classic devils of Christian theology who stick people with blades and fire. She has found a hell aboriginally located in her own body. Having lost all necessity, all personal response and possibility of reaching her own ends, she has become involved in destruction, willing destruction by mimicry of her own path. When she asks Benjamin to make a simple statement like "I will never take out Elaine Robinson," she is extracting from him a promise for his own hell, just as Mephistopholes extracted such a pledge from Faust. He is willing to give it only because he, like Faust, is involved in immediate pleasures and does not know what the promise entails.

It is this way. In a strange fashion (that sometimes falls upon people like an illness or an unlikely condition), Mrs. Robinson has the power of knowing the future. She knows how things will be at the end from seeing how they were at the beginning; she is uninvolved in her affair with Benjamin because she is involved in the flux of all time rather than the present. She has one aim, which has become almost carnal and can be enacted thru other pleasures: to prevent the happy marriage of Elaine and Benjamin. It is tangential (tho metaphysically satisfying) that she is able to share in Benjamin while taking him away from her daughter forever. She will do anything to that end, to extract it as promise. She doesn't have to do very much. Benjamin is willing to be titillated and suspects nothing, would not know how or why to suspect anything. The drama has taken on cosmic proportions (simply by having its source in a conjunction of past and future that is only superficially the present), and yet for Benjamin it has not left the arena of fantasy and masturbation. After the promise he is paying heavily for his stimulation; perhaps the price is his soul. And tho he lingers for just a moment in doubt he finally goes back to bed with her for another time, needing only that is is a good thing to do with his body. By now it is clear that sheer repetition will not awaken him any further. There is no new message in his body, and with nothing coming in from the outside except Mrs. Robinson's convenient flesh he has reached a standstill; he would be well advised to suspect a promise extracted from him at this point. But this has been the pattern of his life: to continue doing what he has found trivially fulfilling, to continue what fulfills his expectations of joy. Perhaps these further juxtapositions are thrilling in a Byronesque sense, but nothing further will be implied in a Platonic universe.

It is not that Mrs. Robinson consciously plots against her daughter, or that she wishes to use her daughter against all men (like Mrs. Havisham in Dickens' Great Expectations). Somehow, by her actions, she is maintaining her role in a complex melodrama; she is preserving the present order in which her melodrama is based. Imagine that a hundred thousand forty-year-old women suddenly began offering their bodies to twelve year old children who were different, who were going to change things, who were born knowing about revolution, the aim of the women to stop their own children, to divert them, to involve them in the old cause before they could begin anything new. It could be a right wing plot to stop Berkeley before it even began, or perhaps a last ditch effort

by old poets and old critics to stop the new vision, Frank Sinatra marrying ever-younger girls to derail them before their time. Despite the paranoia of our age there is no such science fiction story; if anything, this is a history of angels and their battles far from the immediate manifestation of earth. The future, as received in the complex patterning of a present genetic world, is not contained in any collective gesture (marches or wars or love-ins); but in the single episodic interchange between the dying society and the morality of the new-born is the actual drama of transformation. The lower classes and the radicals have their own causes; Platonic metaphysics takes place in the upper class. This is the great difference between "The Graduate" and "Bonnie and Clyde." It is the wealthy upper class that gives Bonnie and Clyde a focus for their rampage; only much later in the film do they realize that it is what they have done to each other personally that has mostly happened on the way, and then it is too late for a peaceful life. Benjamin's binge, when it finally lands him at Berkeley, is totally apart from the more violent revolution there. He is the dark half of the same thing. The protestors at Berkeley, even the hippies, are involved in a totally terrestrial drama; they know their own ecology and are working on different things. Benjamin is completely alone; he is involved in a cosmic drama without knowing it. Bonnie and Clyde must violate symbols as the internal mechanism of their binge. When Benjamin begins moving, the symbols he violates are things which are in his way, which he must push out as a necessity. Make no mistake about the necessity of Bonnie and Clyde; they must continue what they are doing once they start it. They have become the thing and every new idea elevates them about three demi-gods higher; they have fused totally with the idea, and even tho they have discovered each other, their continued existence and finally their death is based on their violation of the symbols rather than the unknown thing they received in the process. Benjamin is only interested in his ends, and the particular violations he thinks up are less creative and less political, but ultimately they are the literal form of all that stands between him and his necessity.

Kafka has given us a deep sense that we are born beside our enemies, not knowing who they are or why they are pursuing and haunting us. It is as tho we came out of a strange part of the universe, and of all the people we find here, we don't know which of them are ancient enemies who have sworn elsewhere to destroy us no matter how many forms and conversions of matter they had to pass thru to do it. They awake beside us, older than we are, sometimes with a head start, sometimes as our very father or mother, our plight sheathed in our necessity to attach ourselves and be loved, sheathed in our condition of birth so perfectly that it is even semantically difficult to perceive what has happened in the household. We are personally, inevitably, and specifically attacked. We have enemies we do not know about, and the battles we are engaged in by them are ultimate in some sense we will never know until we either win or lose.

Given these conditions, we must realize that nothing is trivial. The older generation, filled with enemies, has taught us the motto that women are like buses: there's always another one. This is their Hiroshima-type logic, straight from the mouths of those who made Hiroshima. Nothing is like anything else, and there is only so much time, and we are given only so many chances (the number of course is one -- unlike buses). Elaine Robinson is not just another girl to Benjamin; to see the film as a conventional romance is to mistake the motive premise. Benjamin is not going to get another chance. He is not in the Byronesque tradition of wanting one beautiful woman after another. There is only one thing possible for him, after which: nothing, which Mrs. Robinson knows also. His path has no return; if he fails now his life is ended; he may generate a few happy moments, but his deeper possibilities and energies will have ceased to be. Ouspensky's novel, The Strange Life of Ivan Osokin, is about a man who has failed completely; he has dropped out of school, lost his fortune, and finally his beloved; she is about to be married to another man. Osokin is about to commit suicide when he decides to make one

final trip; he goes to see a magician. At the magician's house he requests a chance to live his life over again; the magician agrees to make that possible but also warns him that nothing will change because he does not understand the nature of time. This is true; he returns to the magician's house, it all having happened again, exactly the same, O-sokin near suicide:

"If you go back now, everything will be the same as before or worse. For instance, you may not meet me. You must understand that chances are limited; no one has unlimited chances. And you never know when you have used your last chance. if you go back blind as you are now, you will do the same things again and a repetition of all that happened before is inevitable. You will not escape from the wheel; everything will go on as before.... But if you still want to go back and begin again I will send you back to the day of your birth, if you like. But I warn you that you will come here again -- if you can."

Time is not a series of alternate probabilities as our parents would have us believe. It happens once, is a locus of points generating each other, the whole locus issuing from any one point. There is no second chance because all the points must be changed; one small change is not enough. It must be done correctly the first time. If Benjamin fails, he will lock himself within time, generate the same cycle forever. This is something he does not realize until the very end. But as he begins to realize that something horrible might happen, he also begins to see that is a horror without limits. He is totally alone; no one has ever told him about such a thing.

In the closing scenes of the film Benjamin knows that Elaine is about to be married to the wrong person, and if this happens there is no cure to it and no end for it; he must somehow stop it. At this height of the binge he suspects that his powers are infinite, if only he could be there.... if only he could be there, then too, on the same locus, there would be something in him that would stop it. The only source of information is directly from the enemy; he confronts Mrs. Robinson in her own house. She is assured, perhaps frantically calm; she has divested herself of all subterfuge. She speaks as if she had known this all along, planned it with only this end in mind. She does not even seem to remember Benjamin, except as an old enemy whom she has finally defeated. Perhaps she can distantly remember that on other worlds she was as certain as this of victory, and somehow had it slip from her; she is anxious to get it over with. She has given him only the tiniest of clues, but it is enough to turn him toward the next clue. He drives wildly back to Berkeley, straight to the guy's fraternity. The situation is grim; he must walk into a pack of wolves, conceal his desperation, and emerge with the necessary information. If they knew, they would tear him apart: not out of great loyalty to their "brother" but because of their archetypal hatred for anyone who is desperate and has little time, their wish to destroy anyone who is involved in a matter of consequence, whose outpouring is really energy and not just a put-on of energy. Benjamin is like Frodo; he can keep his identity concealed from the exploring eye if he plays down his role, talks lightly, gives off no signal of distress. Part of the binge at this point is that he must successfully hide the mark of momentum that is on him, bury it in the jargon he exchanges with those who might begin to watch him carefully. Once he has completed the riddle and is enroute to the apotheosis, he has no sense he could fail -- until the very end. He is souring in his car across the land of a new culture, one he has created himself, and not even the most sacred symbol of the old culture, the most closed and unapproachable gathering can stop his streak.

Let us return to examine the moments that immediately follow the promise. He has no intention of taking out Elaine Robinson, but his parents, as if willing accomplices of the supernals, confront him with an "either.....or." If he doesn't take her out, they will have a family gathering with "all the Robinsons." So Benjamin takes her out. The initial meeting with Elaine is inevitable and crucial. Like Ivan Osokin he has the odd feeling, even in acting it out for the first time, that is has all happened already and he

is merely living it thru. On one level the date has received a great deal of seemingly undue concern; he has had to promise to one person that he would never do such a thing, and in order to mollify another person, his mother, he had to promise that he would. But on another level Benjamin has known for some time that things are different; he has a premonition that something is going to happen. He has been on a binge since the first meeting with Mrs. Robinson, but he is not aware of it until he comes to know Elaine. He also does not suspect that he has an enemy until he finds out how much he likes Elaine; then the whole world that has been happening as if arbitrary, as if haphazard, begins recoiling on him.

Sometimes the devils operate so effectively that there would seem to be no angels. But are there any devils? Do not the angels merely work thru channels that appear complicated from our position within but are actually the only means to certain ends? Are the devils anything more than a distortion of angels seen from the vantage point of one moment of hell on the planet earth, and thus named devils? If Benjamin had met Elaine in the natural sequence of things it is quite possible that he would have been shy, or unattuned; he might not have noticed her, or made her notice him until it was too late. He would have known nothing about her. Meeting her now, he knows two of her most important physical components: the conditions of her conception and the body of her mother. From the moment they enter the car he is physically indulging his binge. The car may have been purchased with his father's money, part of the paternal hand-down, but he has developed it as a limb of his body itself (the way so many teen-agers do without any other easy expression of their passion). He is able to be hostile to Elaine, which means that he is able to have a style, leave the mark of his hostility on her; he is not simply neutral or dull even tho he has nothing to report for his life thus far. He is able to act it all out, be the thing he is thinking, communicate who he is to her so that she may begin to know. Mrs. Robinson has already made it clear that nothing need be obscure except the reasons themselves.

He leads her to a strip show, walking rapidly ahead so that she must follow. She is seated, back to the stripper, and sits there crying, refusing to look. She feels as tho something has happened that she can't possibly know about; meanwhile she is physically juxtaposed against the stripper's body, the bare shaking legs wrapped around her head at the focal length of the camera. This scene is a correlate of the original meeting with Mrs. Robinson in Elaine's room; in the earlier scene Mrs. Robinson is naked, is exhibiting her body, is trying to turn him on; the room is Elaine's, her picture on the wall, her image repeated in her mother's form. Now the principles are changed, but the heavy mature sexual image still hangs over Elaine, a flash of energy suggesting the infinite contained sexuality of a body, sexual energy toyed with by the stripper, made slurpy-over-the-edges (like lava not yet ready to flow). But under any conditions sexual energy does not deny its ultimate source. In the Qabbala it is known that once a man is destined for a certain woman he must spend all his time with her, and when he is not with her a guardian angel travels in her place, over in the guise of another woman; there is only one woman for any man. In a sense Benjamin begins to have Elaine in the form of her mother; it is Elaine's picture, but Elaine's mother whose body is revealed, a revelation which jumps the circuit and comes home to roost when Elaine and the stripper fuse as separate aspects of the same female image, the stripper physically imposed on her (and above) like some degenerate higher form, a leaking of simultaneous energy, Elaine, Mrs. Robinson, a naked dancer flinging tassels on her breasts. Somehow at this moment Mrs. Robinson ceases to exist as Benjamin's object; the transfer is made to Elaine where it falls naturally upon another promise, a remembered promise that they would always be together, not recent, in fact so old that the promise seems linked to the knowledge they would be born into two adjacent families. There are no symbols involved here. The stripper does not stand for titillating sexuality; she

is the actual energy of titillation. The film-maker is not trying to put over an identity on us; the three people, Mrs. Robinson, Elaine, and the stripper form a cline; they are simultaneous members of a syntagmatic chain in Benjamin's mind. Perhaps, if you believe in angels, it is a message, a composite clue formed in a flash of feedback. Perhaps it is true for other reasons.

Benjamin's reaction to the message is apropos his style of hostility, comes sweeping out of his binge. "Can you do that?" he asks as the tassels twirl round the nipples. His connection is immediate, absolute, was syntagmatic, is made semantic. Now she gets up and leaves, he following her, the binge at high pitch. Mrs. Robinson has made all things more easy. He can kiss Elaine while she is crying even tho it is a first date (he has already kissed her mother). He can charge into her room the next day before she is fully dressed because he has been in the company of her naked mother. In her eyes he is able to do all the right things because he is as hostile and symbol-hating as she, and he is able to act out his irreverence. He is almost slap-happy and gay in this delta of his new-found energy, and also delighted that he is in love (love freeing him from the shoddiness of previous sex and renewing possibilities for setting his heart going). If he were an initiate this would be the second step, the message more tightly spooled, wound in itself and with less static; the problem is more deeply buried in his body; it is his own ancient problem and he has found himself.

During the first night out with Elaine, after the initial episode at the night-club, they talk as if old friends, renewing a forgotten friendship. The warmth with which they regard each other is that of people who have known each other for a long time and spoken over many important things. This is not the renewal of their high school communication, but of a friendship long before then, a friendship of two people who were probably not the same as they are now when it happened. They know each other; they know what they have to say to each other; they have said it before; the joy is in renewing it in this fresh surroundings, a confused lifetime of some twenty years behind both of them, and before that: what? No doubt the same meeting that is occurring now. It is time for a change; it is time for old allies to come together and change the bitter earth, to have what they have always had; it is an end to games, a beginning to a life. But it is too late; Mrs. Robinson has already cast a spell over her enemy, her daughter, and merely has to wait for the charm to bear fruit. Her relationship with Benjamin changes now; she has done what she has to do; all she need take is a paternal role, forbidding him, making him keep his promise, holding revelation of their affair over his head. Benjamin may know Elaine better than she does, but much has happened, and she knows her daughter and has formed certain genetic and carnal links with her. It is truly too late for Benjamin.

The decision to marry Elaine is the only one he can make under the circumstances. If the stakes are high in terms of the accruing consequences, then he might as well make his own stakes as high as the stakes actually are, risking everything (but at least in a climactic battle). Benjamin must mean by marrying her that he will take her out of the culture and make his own. In his parent's culture marriage implies a certain type of courtship, certain calm and resolved intentions. It describes a different more passive "after-the-fact" thing than Benjamin intends. His idea of marriage is the dynamic itself, the form and force of the change. It is something he will do on the spur of the moment not because it is well-thought-out but because it is the only thing he can do at that moment; he can't get thru the moment without doing it. Furthermore, he is already beginning to sense that it must be her binge also but that she has been rendered more powerless. In any case, it is he who can see the thing which is to join them; it is happening to them thru him, and if it is to happen at all he must respond.

As he finds himself further and further outside the culture his embarrassment fades away; he is able to do things simply because he is important and flying; he is working on necessities and there is no reason for hesitation. Benjamin who couldn't get a room

in the Taft Hotel under far more reasonable circumstances is able to get one in a Berkeley rooming house despite a sticky situation. He is able to race Elaine's bus, charge onto it, and sit down behind her, and talk blatantly within a chi square of nosy people. "People talking without speaking," Simon and Garfunkel were able to sing before. Now Benjamin must put this to an end. He must be heard. It is too late, much too late, to observe still the culture's protecting wall of polite silence. What has has to say will be shouted if it must over a million glaring people, the unforgiving mores which they pass on in giving up their bodies and souls for eternity. Benjamin must act now, forever. He insults the boy-friend she is about to meet at the zoo, pursues her, and then is dumped in front of the monkeys as she leaves him to embrace her date.

Here, as in the diving-suit sequence, the camera does not leave the scene as it ends but explores the further possibilities of the final image. The important thing about the monkeys and apes is not that they are separated from Benjamin by a wall of silence and gesticulating while encaged (which would be a symbol); the important thing is that they are without responsibility in the cosmic drama and can accrue no karma/ lose no souls in the endless chain of causation. Benjamin can. Until some weight falls on them (certainly not here), they are free to suffer this indignity without pain or damnation. The distances are important, not the petty symbol. The distance between Benjamin and the apes is not symbolic and not obvious; it is the distance of Benjamin from his earlier pose, and his lingering surprise that things have changed.

Now it is a question of momentum. Once Benjamin gets to Berkeley his commitment is of a new and larger sort; there is no return home even as each bravery recalls to him how vacuous and dead was the thing he left behind in coming, the body floating on the chlorine-pool, the paternal feeding time. In the further confrontations with Elaine he simply gathers momentum, becoming more and more sure that she likes him/ loves him. He asks her again and again to marry him; he is confident that she will but is not prepared for either eventuality. He is growing rapidly, spinning old curses into new fire at the center of his conscious being, but he has not yet fully interpreted from the pouring-thru of messages that his life is at stake now that he has come this far. He can shout in the library if he has something to say (even if he reveals scandalously what he knows of her past); he can ask her to marry him, on the spot again and again even tho she is engaged to someone else. He shouts in the library but he is going to have to shout much more irreverently and with greater risk before he is done. She doesn't hear, but he is also out-of-touch. He is not moving fast enough because he is thinking only in terms of her and not of his enemies. She comes in the morning to wake him to kiss her; they don't realize it is too late. He goes out to buy wedding presents completing the third stage of the binge.

Mr. Robinson arrives. Mrs. Robinson has told all, destroying her own life because she must in order to accomplish her task. The father places the entire weight of his culture and tradition between Benjamin and Elaine. They can no longer make it simply in the terms of this world; they must remember ancient vows made in other surroundings, and the magical formulas that go with them. Benjamin is now frantic, his binge at a height; he is willing to give twenty dollars for a dime to use the phone, the "sounds of silence" shutting him out, that his needs are not great enough to violate the flimsiest of symbols even tho his needs have become the whole universe. He is the ring-bearer now; he has already bought the ring.

Contextual space is no longer of importance; Benjamin must drive hundreds of miles back and forth in order to come to the proper place. He realizes that he has no choice; he must act out every mile of it. This is the point at which he begins making things up with ease; the seriousness of the world in which he has been living does not matter, is not, in fact, a serious matter; there is another world, a world he always knew, forgot while lying around; it is the only possible world, and in his haste he is trying to save

that world, not one person but an entire planet of possibilities. And no one can know, no one can help him. No one can comfort him if he fails. The car runs out of gas; his body is the only form he has left in which to race; he runs into the camera, perspective batting him down. There is a point at which the angels can have no more say, when a man must do what he can (which is a reason for this earth as apart from the other in which the angels live). The moment of detachment comes with a mechanical musical note and the wide-angle lens placing the whole church and tiny Benjamin in perspective, an edifice as silent as any on this world yet built in the name of the angels and their god. The binge is at an end; he is out of breath. From here on in everything is real and what happens is history as it will always be known hereafter. The main door is locked; he enters thru a side-door and goes upto the second balcony. For twenty-one years he has lived on the earth; now suddenly he comes upon his enemies in an alien culture; they are surrounding the one he must speak to. Now he understands what it is about this planet; without remembering a word of the ancient dream and what the gods said, he remembers it all; he can no longer live on this planet; he knows who he is; he knows who they are; he knows where he is; he knows what has happened. What he sees is not the Garden of Eden buried within perspective points but a grotesque mockery of the Garden, Eve with another man as if a malignant mutation had altered the whole creation. His wife, the queen who reigns down thru his history, is just now married to another man; the organist begins to play, the parties to the wedding rise, he buried behind a huge pane of glass, now leaning on it, and he says, "Oh God no."

Where is your faith, you men of so little faith? Johannes inquires of the funeral gathering at the end of "Ordet." But there is a word (*Ordet*) which can bring back the dead. Johannes holds the hand of the dead woman's little girl; he asks God who can do so much for a miracle, for the Word. And he brings her back to life.

This is the test for Benjamin, the only possible test on earth: does he, in the end, care more than they? The binge is over, but in him there is something more, something forgotten, a low deep moaning of Elaine's name, repeated as in a chant. This was not a symbol for the Gregorian Chant, but the Chant itself because it was happening here in the church, the syntagmatic chain making the ancient moan available to Benjamin thru where he is. It is Petrarch calling to Laura (he will never have her); it is his last song to her, all that a troubadour poet can manage in his death. In doing this he has broken the last and deepest silence; he has penetrated all the symbols: the church, the forced gathering, the sufficiency and titillation, Mrs. Robinson fucking him without words, his parents feeding him; there is only one tone left in his body, just above breathing, the word in its chanted variation forming its own syntactic chain, going deeper and deeper into a death that has prevailed for at least two hundred years.

Mr. Robinson is furious. "Let him," says Mrs. Robinson; "he has already lost." His power accumulates; he stands as if God touching and alarming the whole congregation, they who have destroyed him; he is the possible voice of the angels. He is not meant to be Christ; he is not meant to stand for a muted society that has built this church for prayer but whose screams die out in the night. He represents himself only, and a world he knows is possible, a planet where he and Elaine are, have always been the geophysical strata, and there is nothing more, except an eternity of this.

In his moan he contacts her and works the miracle; she breaks down to call his name too. A melee follows in which he knocks over Mr. Robinson in racing to her call, and she and her mother confront each other for the first time as archetypal enemies. Benjamin is able to grab the steel cross and hold them off. It is not a symbol; it is merely a convenient implement. He bars the door between the handles with it not because Christianity locks them in their own church but because it is hard steel and excellent for the purpose (a whole archaeological theory of tool development from religious objects is based on such moments of crisis). They get on a bus, she in her bride's costume, and

walk down the aisle there; people are shocked; they have said no words but they have screamed and Simon and Garfunkel are starting to sing the song again as at the beginning of the binge; they are peaceful, on the verge of ecstasy. It is not only a matter of victory on earth; it is Shekinah on the back seat of a bus, victory of the angels, victory in heaven as well, the warrior awaking in an ancient sleep and finding the body he needed, carrying on to the end. The binge has short-cut a thousand years; they are where no one else can be, behind them an impossible trite melodrama which they have thrown off like old skin. Whether it will last forever I don't know.

-- Richard Grossinger

Given that all the houndog and hangnail projectives are in and one mister's system is as good as a miss I'd point you to some still moments divested of all but the still orient pearls verse-strung by Idell in her book called Zen Love Poems published by The Love Press of Topanga (2215 N. Topanga Canyon Blvd., Topanga, California) her slight looking forms actually have come from verbally crowded spaces cleared for the distillation with a bend of the sigh in each which work magnificently large to the accompaniment of one's own inner lute reception or string instrument reminiscent of Lee Ching-chao's tzu form she strokes the quatrain ever so slightly out of traditional shape into the sad joy of paradox

on the road
i meet a stranger;
he has a piece of my robe
in his pocket.

we live together
by the river.

then on the road
i meet a stranger...

simple and totally aerial spare and yet in the center unswerving except to be be seen through

§ § §

No one has more exemplified the loving anarchy of the Einstein continuum of California than has George Herms poet painter sculptor and printer of The Love Press books whose own sufferings of poem and line drawings tuned with the seasons of wartorn consciousness ever in need of lyrics come directly out of trees or the goat's bright foot have made a few feel many and the many possessed yearn for the few for Herms literally plucks his works off the branches which are the source of the telling mixing up the sublime width of the whoopee of this slavishly free California with the zippazapp of old contradictions as in one of the pages from CLEARSPRING

this instant bird
croaks prophetic
and I flee in peace

knowing nothing
loving all

Herms brings to his pages what is in his person a continual deferment of self in favor of the source which short of ever being exhausted in name revolves with lovely wind around the hair and form of his woman who becomes the hidden affirmation of all that every thing named at bottom is in short poetry itself with heaps of dead lust or kulchur's bones about it but never touching the pure intent that springs and bubbles up these easy going fountains turning all us grey Dogs in the direction of the well for Christ's sakes the sun in the morning the moon at night

--Jack Hirschman

in good time, Cid Corman, origin press. Available thru the Asphodel Book Store, 306 Superior Ave., Cleveland, Ohio.

The old man in kimono
bent a little as though to
be able to hold better

his grandson's hand this morning
leads the child along the stream
among the rice-fields. The sun

is plucked here and there at points
to provide their quietness
bouquet. They see together.

Aroma is the fragrance from the grapes-- bouquet, from fermenting and aging. Corman's in good time comes in just that. It is a lifetime of work, tho the poet is not that old, brought thru experiences and places stayed at, to Kyoto, Japan, where the poet finally finds his ground. To Kyoto and also to a level of writing (in the above vision nearly synonymous).

For those who have followed Corman's fairly private books of poetry over the years, in good time will seem big: 76 poems, spaced in 5 fifteen poem sections called Boston, Europe, Japan, America, and Kyoto. The pull is away from Europe and America, the entire book feels written out of Kyoto; there is, from the opening Boston section (child & young manhood) a draw as of earth unsettling waters thru leaving home, country, romance, the burst & disappearance of a woman, the floating off to the East (where the unnumbered poem falls), Japan for a time, then once more the draw back to America, the final leaving back to Japan, to particular place, Kyoto, from wch the "we" of the old man & grandson, above, emerges. There is a sense of lifetime (perhaps one reason why one feels a deep sadness pervasive in nearly all of the work), and the realization of a life is the most remarkable thing about this collection. One may disagree with Corman about how he sees life or what the world is for him, but in his own terms he is nearly faultless:

I picked a
leaf up

it weighed

my vision

I knelt and
placed it

almost
where it was

The above poem concludes the Japan section and has just fallen on one --& I am moved & locked outside by it-- a couple of poems after the centerbeam:

NEW YEARS 1959

a fierce
black pine
in the dead light

blunt
and to the point
all at once

death is
a peak
that reaches us

the eye
looks up and out
and in

and I
no longer here
but here

In the stanza "death is/a peak/that reaches us" I believe Corman understood where he wanted to live, and this knowing where and how provides basis for the increasing cutting down of language & emotion to zenithal points. The Kyoto section of the book lacks the struggle of I alone the poems before had taken their strength from. Corman's Kyoto is a Kyoto of the past, and the argument for this past is made in the fact that Corman presently lives it as do many Japanese, wch is to say it is not really the past, but a present our times have greatly obscured. Reading McLuhan on Burroughs a few weeks ago prompted me to begin this review. The gigantic-space-energy-electric feeling one gets from McLuhan and Burroughs is antithesis to Corman's "we share an/anonymity". Corman's poetry provides resistance that forces back into the mind in contrast to the opening of a field. In THE TREE he speaks of himself as a tree and I think his work gains and suffers from that exact rootedness (the geographical movement is no contradiction here)-- he will not be brought out of the freezing cold when others are getting drunk by the fire, but he is the one who will save you from despair. Look out the window: I am, the work says, refusing and yielding. There is always a pane between.

THE TREE

I am that tree

whose fall
shook gold
from head and shoulder

who could stand there
at the
end of
the street and wonder

how the daylight
made of
dying
a blazing shelter

until winter
elu-
cidates
to a far finer

silver shiver
branches
whose root-
edness I suffer

--C E (written in winter, 1964)



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